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Edited by B. Rajan

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man standing by his word

respect for the kind of intelligence that enables grass seed to grow grass; the cherry-stone to make cherries

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The Analects

Translated by EZRA POUND

NOTE TO THIS NEW VERSION:

After Confucius' death, when there was talk of regrouping, Tsang declined, saying: "Washed in the Keang and Han, bleached in the autumn sun's-slope, what whiteness can one add to that whiteness, what candour?"* (*Mencius III, 1; IV, 13.*)

The friend who hoped to find beauty in this translation will not find the beauty of the Odes, nor the coherence of the Pivot. The Analects are neither a continuous narrative, nor a collection of fancy ideas. It is an error to seek aphorisms and bright saying in sentences that should be considered rather as definitions of words, and a number of them should be taken rather as lexicography, as examples of how Kung had used a given expression in defining a man or a condition.

Points define a periphery. What the reader can find here is a set of measures whereby, at the end of a day, to learn whether the day has been worth living. The translation succeeds in its moderate aim if it gives the flavour of laconism and the sense of the live man speaking.

After finishing it I turned back to Pauthier's French, and have included a number of his phrases as footnotes (*marked* P), *sometimes as alternative interpretation, sometimes for their own sake even when I do not think he is nearer the original meaning.*

The few dictionary references [M] *are to R. H. Mathews'* Chinese-English Dictionary (*Cambridge, Harvard University Press,* 1947, *4th ed.*), *that being the one most easily obtainable at the moment.*

During the past half-century (*since Legge's studies*) *a good deal of light has been shed on the subject by Fenollosa* (Written Character as a Medium for Poetry), *Frobenius* (Erlebte Erdteile) *and Karlgren* (*studies of sacrificial bone inscriptions*).

E. P.

**yang*^{2}: bright, positive. Definite illustration of why one wants a bilingual edition. The usage of terms by any great stylist is, or should be, determined by the Four Books.

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BOOK ONE

I

1. He said: Study with the seasons winging past, is not this pleasant?

2. To have friends coming in from far quarters, not a delight?

3. Unruffled by men's ignoring him, also indicative of high breed.

II

1. Few filial and brotherly men enjoy cheeking their superiors, no one averse from cheeking his superiors stirs up public disorder.

2. The real gentleman goes for the root, when the root is solid the (beneficent) process starts growing, filiality and brotherliness are the root of manhood, increasing with it.

III

1. He said: Elaborate phrasing about correct appearances seldom means manhood.

IV

1. Tseng-tse said: I keep an eye on myself, daily, for three matters: to get to the middle of mind when planning with men; to keep faith with my friends; lest I teach and not practice.

V

1. He said: To keep things going in a state of ten thousand cars: respect what you do and keep your word, keep accurate accounts and be friendly to others, employ the people in season. [*Probably meaning public works are not to interfere with agricultural production.*]

VI

1. He said: Young men should be filial in the home, and brotherly outside it; careful of what they say, but once said, stick to it; be agreeable to everyone, but develop friendship (further) with the real men; if they have any further energy left over, let them devote it to culture.

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VII

1. Hsia-tze said: Gives weight to real worth and takes beauty lightly [*or "amid changing appearances"*], puts energy into being useful to his father and mother, and his whole personality into serving his prince; keeps his word with his friends; call him unaccomplished, I say that he is accomplished.

VIII

1. He said: A gentleman with no weight will not be revered, his style of study lacks vigour.
2. First: get to the middle of the mind; then stick to your word.
3. Friendship with equals.
4. Don't hesitate to correct errors.

IX

1. Tseng-tse said: Look clearly to the end, and follow it up a long way; the people acting on conscience will get back to the solid.

X

1. Tze-Chin asked Tze-Kung: When the big man gets to a country he has to hear about its government, does he ask for what's given him or is it just given?
2. Tze-Kung said: The big man is easy-going and kindly, respectful in manner, frugal, polite, that's how he gets it. His mode of going after it differs from other men's.

XI

1. He said: During a father's life time, do what he wants; after his death, do as he did. If a man can go along like his father for three years, he can be said to be carrying-on filially.

XII

1. Yu-tze said: Gentleness (easiness) is to be prized in ceremony, that was the antient kings' way, that was beautiful and the source of small actions and great.
2. But it won't always do. If one knows how to be easy and is, without following the details of ceremony, that won't do.

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XIII

1. Yu-tze said: When keeping one's word comes near to justice one can keep it; when respect is almost a ceremony it will keep one far from shame and disgrace. Starting with not losing one's relatives, one can found a line with honour. [*This reading will be disputed and is perhaps too bold.*]

XIV

1. He said: A gentleman eats without trying to stuff himself, dwells without seeking (total) quietude, attends to business, associates with decent people so as to adjust his own decencies; he can be said to love study.

XV

1. Tze-King said: Poor and no flatterer, rich and not high-horsey, what about him?

He said: Not like a fellow who is poor and cheerful, or rich and in love with precise observance.

2. Tze-King said: It's in the Odes "as you cut and then file; carve and then polish." That's like what you mean?

3. Ts'ze here, one can begin to discuss the Odes with him; gave him the beginning and he knew what comes (after it).

XVI

1. He said: Not worried that men do not know me, but that I do not understand men.

BOOK TWO

I

1. Governing by the light of one's conscience is like the pole star which dwells in its place, and the other stars fulfill their functions respectfully.

II

1. He said: The anthology of 300 poems can be gathered into the one sentence: Have no twisty thoughts.

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III

1. He said: If in governing you try to keep things leveled off in order by punishments, the people will, shamelessly, dodge.

2. Governing them by looking straight into one's heart and then acting on it (on conscience) and keeping order by the rites, their sense of shame will bring them not only to an external conformity but to an organic order.

IV

1. He said: At fifteen I wanted to learn.
2. At thirty I had a foundation.
3. At forty, a certitude.
4. At fifty, knew the orders of heaven.
5. At sixty was ready to listen to them.
6. At seventy could follow my own heart's desire without overstepping the t-square.

V

1. Mang-I-tze asked about filiality. He said: Don't disobey.*

2. Fan Ch'ih was driving him and he said: Mang-Sun asked me about filiality, I said: it consists in not disobeying (not opposing, not avoiding).

3. Fan Ch'ih said: How do you mean that? He said: While they are alive, be useful to them according to the proprieties, when dead, bury them according to the rites, make the offerings according to the rites.

VI

1. Mang Wu the elder asked about filiality. He said: A father or mother is only worried as to whether a child is sick.

VII

1. Tze-Yu asked about filiality. He said: Present day filial piety consists in feeding the parents, as one would a dog or a horse; unless there is reverence, what difference is there?

---

*P. expands the single word *wei* to mean: *s'opposer aux principes de la raison*, making the sentence equivalent to Gilson's statement of Erigena: Authority comes from right reason—anticipating the "rites" (light and dish of fecundity) a few lines further down.

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VIII

1. Tze-Hsia asked about filiality. He said: The trouble is with the facial expression. Something to be done, the junior takes trouble, offers food first to his elders, is that all there is to filiality?

IX

1. He said: I have talked a whole day with Hui and he sits quiet as if he understood nothing, then I have watched what he does. Hui is by no means stupid.

X

1. He said: Watch a man's means, what and how.
2. See what starts him.
3. See what he is at ease in.
4. How can a man conceal his real bent?

XI

1. If a man keep alive what is old and recognize novelty, he can, eventually, teach.

XII

1. The proper man is not a dish.

XIII

1. Tze-Kung said: What is a proper man? He said: He acts first and then his talk fits what he has done.

XIV

1. He said: A proper man is inclusive, not sectary; the small man is sectarian and not inclusive.

XV

1. He said: Research without thought is a mere net and entanglement; thought without gathering data, a peril.

XVI

1. He said: Attacking false systems merely harms you.

XVII

1. He said: Yu, want a definition of knowledge? To know

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is to act knowledge, and, when you do not know, not to try to appear as if you did, that's knowing.

XVIII

1. Tze-Chang was studying to get a paid job.

2. He said: Listen a lot and hide your suspicions; see that you really mean what you say about the rest, and you won't get into many scrapes. Look a lot, avoid the dangerous and be careful what you do with the rest, you will have few remorses. Salary is found in a middle space where there are few words blamed, and few acts that lead to remorse.

XIX

1. Duke Ai asked how to keep the people in order. He said: Promote the straight and throw out the twisty, and the people will keep order; promote the twisty and throw out the straight and they won't.

XX

1. Chi K'ang asked how to instill that sincere reverence which would make people work. He said: Approach them seriously [*verso il popolo*], respectful and deferent to everyone; promote the just and teach those who just cannot, and they will try.

XXI

1. Some one asked Confucius why he was not in the government.

2. He said: The Historic Documents say: filiality, simply filiality and the exchange between elder and younger brother, that spreads into government, why should one go into the government?

[P. turns this admirably: Pourquoi considérer seulement ceux qui occupent des emplois publics, comme remplissant des fonctions publiques.]

XXII

1. He said: Men don't keep their word, I don't know what can be done for them: a great cart without a wagon-pole, a small cart and no place to hitch the traces.

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XXIII

1. Tze-Chang asked if there were any knowledge good for ten generations.

2. He said: Yin, because there was wisdom in the rites of Hsia, took over some and added, and one can know this; Chou because it was in the rites of Yin took some and added; and one can know what; someone will thread along after Chou, be it to an hundred generations one can know.

XXIV

1. He said: To sacrifice to a spirit not one's own is flattery.

2. To see justice and not act upon it is cowardice.

BOOK THREE

Pa Yih
The Eight Rows

I

1. Corps de ballet eight rows deep in Head of Chi's courtyard. Kung-tze said: If he can stand for that, what won't he stand for?

II

1. The Three Families used the Yung Ode while the sacrificial vessels were cleared away. He said: "The Princes are facing the Dukes, the Son of Heaven is like a field of grain in the sunlight," does this apply to their family halls?

III

1. A man without manhood, is this like a rite? Is there any music to a man without manhood?

IV

1. Lin Fang asked what was the root of the rites?

2. He said: That is no small question.

3. Better to be economical rather than extravagant in festivities and take funerals sorrowfully rather than lightly. [Poignancy rather than nuances (of ceremony).]

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V

1. He said eastern and northern tribes have princes not like this Hsia country has lost. [*Or:* which has lost them.]

VI

1. The head of the Chi sacrificing to T'ai Shan (the Sacred East Mountain) Confucius said to Zan Yu: Can't you save him? The reply was: I cannot. Kung said: Too bad, that amounts to saying that T'ai Shan is below the level of Lin Fang. [*Vide supra,* IV, 1.]

VII

1. He said: The proper man has no squabbles, if he contends it is in an archery contest, he bows politely and goes up the hall, he comes down and drinks (his forfeit if he loses) contending like a gentleman.

VIII

1. Tze-Hsia asked the meaning of:
   "The dimpled smile, the eye's clear white and black,
   Clear ground whereon hues lie."
2. He said: The broidery is done after the simple weaving.
3. (Hsia) said: You mean the ceremonial follows . . .?
4. He said: Shang's on, I can start discussing poetry with him.

IX

1. He said: I can speak of the Hsia ceremonial but you can't prove it by Chi (data); I can speak of the Yin ceremonies but Sung (data) won't prove it. The inscribed offerings are insufficient to argue from, were they adequate they could bear me out. [*I should think this* hsien 4. M. 2699, *might refer to the inscribed sacrificial bones, which Karlgren has done so much work on.*]

X

1. He said: When the Emperor has poured the libation in the Sacrifice to the Source of the dynasty, I have no wish to watch the rest of the service.

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XI

1. Someone said: What does the sacrifice mean? He said: I do not know. If one knew enough to tell that, one could govern the empire as easily as seeing the palm of one's hand.

XII

1. He sacrificed as if he had taken root-hold in the earth, he sacrificed to the circumvolent spirits as if they took root.

2. He said: If I do not enter into this light, it is as if I did not sacrifice. [*Or,* if I do not give, *i.e.* myself, to it.]

XIII

1. "stove versus altar"

Wang-sun Chia asked the meaning of: It is better to pay court to the hearth [*present lexicons:* stove] than to the mysterious (the household gods).

2. He said: It simply isn't. Who sins against heaven has nothing to pray to. [No means of getting light with the seasons.]

XIV

1. He said: Chou revised the two dynasties, how full and precise was its culture, I follow Chou.

XV

1. Entering the Great Temple he asked about every detail. Someone said: Who says the Man from Tsau knows the rites? He goes into the Great Temple and asks about everything. He said: That is the etiquette.

XVI

"bullseye better than shooting thru the target"

1. He said: In archery the going clean thru the leather is not the first requisite. Men aren't equally strong. That was the old way [? when they were expected to be all of them fit for it].

XVII

1. Tze-Kung wanted to eliminate the sheep from the sacrifice to the new moon.

2. He said: You, Ts'ze, love the sheep, I love the rite.

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XVIII

1. He said: Some people consider it sycophancy to serve one's prince with all the details of the rites.

XIX

1. The Duke of Ting asked how a prince should employ his ministers, and how ministers should serve their prince. Kung-tze answered. The prince uses his ministers according to the prescribed ceremonial, ministers serve the prince by their sincerity. [The prince to judge the propriety, the ministers (middle-heart) not to fake in the execution.]

XX

1. He said: The fish-hawk song [*the first of the folk-songs in the anthology*] is pleasant without being licentious, its melancholy does no hurt (does not wound).

XXI

1. The Duke Ai asked Tsai Wo about the chthonian altars.* Tsai Wo replied: The Hsia dynasty's clans planted pines, the Yin cypress, and the men of Chou chestnut trees (*li*) in order to instill awe (*li*) in the populace.

2. Kung heard this and said: Perfect acts do not use words, prolonged customs are not sentenced, what formerly was is not to be blamed.

XXII

1. He said: Kwan Chung is a small dish, and how!

2. Someone said: Is Kwan Chung stingy?

3. He said: Kwan Chung had the Triple-Return (pagoda), court functionaries did not work overtime, how can he have been stingy?

4. "Did Kwan Chung, then, know the ceremonies?"

5. (He) said: Princes of States plant gate-screens; Kwan Chung also set up a gate-screen. When State-Princes meet they have a small table for inverted cups; Kwan also had a small table, if Kwan knew how to behave who doesn't?

*P. *autels ou tertres de terre;* rather than P's "*autour*", I should take "amid" pines, etc.

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XXIII

1. Talking with the superintendent of music in Lu, he said: One can understand this music; a rousing start in unison, then the parts follow pure, clear one from another, (brilliant) explicit to the conclusion.

XXIV

1. The Border Warden at I asked to see him, saying when gentlemen come here I have always seen them. (Kung's) escort introduced him. He came out saying: Small group of friends [*lit:* you two three gentlemen] how can you regret his loss of office. The empire has long been in anarchy. Heaven will use the big man as a watchman's rattle. [L. (*Legge*): bell with wooden tongue. M.: with clapper.]

XXV

1. He said: The Shao (songs) are completely beautiful and wholly good. The Wu are beautiful, completely, but not completely good (morally proportioned).

XXVI

1. He said: Dwelling on high without magnanimity, performing the rites without reverence, coming to funerals without regrets; why should I bother about 'em?

BOOK FOUR

I

1. He said: A neighborhood's humanity is its beauty. If a man doesn't settle among real people, how can he know.

II

1. He said: without manhood one cannot stand difficulties, nor live for long amid pleasures. The real man is at rest in his manhood, the wise man profits by it.

III

1. He said: only the complete man can love others, or hate them.

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IV

1. He said: if the will is set toward manhood, there is no criminality. [*The graph of* kou[3] *suggests grass-root cf/mustard seed.*]

V

1. He said: Riches with honour are what men desire; if not obtained in the right way, they do not last. Poverty and penny-pinching are what men hate, but are only to be avoided in the right way.

2. If a gentleman give up manhood, what does his title really mean, what does the complete name gentle-man mean?

3. A proper man doesn't merely lay off his manhood after dinner. He must have it to make a sequence, he must have it in sudden disasters.

VI

1. He said: I have not seen anyone who loves whole-humanity and who hates un-whole manhood, if he love this whole-manhood (humanity) he cannot rise above it; if he hate the un-whole manhood, he would go to work on his own manhood, he would not try to get incomplete men to heighten his character for him.

2. If a man can direct his energy for one day toward manhood, eh? I have not seen anyone's energy insufficient.

3. A case may exist, but I have not seen it.

VII

1. He said: A man's errors, every one of em' belong to his environment (clique, party, gang he associates with), watch his faults and you can judge his humanity.

VIII

1. He said: hear of the process at sun-rise, you can die in the evening. [*Word order is:* morning hear process, evening die can? may, you may, it is possible that you may.]

IX

1. He said: A scholar with his will on learning the process,

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who is ashamed of poor clothes, and fusses over bad food, is not worth talking to.

X

1. He said: a proper man is not absolutely bent on, or absolutely averse from anything in particular, he will be just.

XI

1. The proper man is concerned with examining his consciousness and acting on it, the small man is concerned about land; the superior man about legality, the small man about favours.

XII

1. He said: always on the make: many complaints.

XIII

1. He said: Can with ceremony and politeness manage a state, what difficulty will he have; unable to govern a state with ceremonies and courtesy; what ordered enlightenment has he?

XIV

1. He said: Not worried at being out of a job, but about being fit for one; not worried about being unknown but about doing something knowable.

XV

1. He said: Shan, my process is unified, penetrating, it holds things together and sprouts. Tsang said: Only?

2. (Kung)[2]-tze went out. A disciple asked: what does he mean? Tsang-tze said: the big man's way consists in sincerity and sympathy, and that's all.

XVI

1. He said: The proper man understands* equity, the small man, profits.

*yu: mouth answering in the affirmative, parable: responds to, all out for.

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XVII

1. He said: See solid talent and think of measuring up to it; see the un-solid and examine your own insides.

XVIII

1. He said: In being useful to father and mother, one can almost reprove them; but if they won't do what one wants one must respect them and not oppose* them, work and not grumble.

XIX

1. He said: during their lifetime one must not go far abroad, or if one does, must leave an address.

XX

1. He said: To carry on in a father's way for three years, can be called continuing as a son.

XXI

1. He said: one must recognize the age of one's father and mother both as a measure of good, and of anxiety.

XXII

1. He said: The men of old held in their words for fear of not matching them in their character.

XXIII

1. Those who consume their own smoke seldom get lost. The concise seldom err.

XXIV

1. He said: the proper man wants to put a meaning into his words (or to be slow in speech), ready in action.

XXV

1. He said: candidness is not fatherless, it is bound to have neighbours.

XXVI

1. Tze-Yu said: Harping on things with a prince brings disgrace, and between friends estrangement.

**wei cf*/II. v. 1.

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BOOK FIVE

Kung-Ye Ch'ang

I

1. He described Kung-Ye Ch'ang as a suitable husband: although he was fettered with the black (criminal's) rope he was not guilty; completing the idea he gave him his daughter to wife.

2. Of Nan Yung he said: if the country were well governed he would not be out of office; if the country were in chaos he would escape punishment and disgrace; he gave him his elder brother's daughter to wife.

II

1. He said of Tze-Chien: a proper man, and how! If there weren't proper men in Lu, where did he get it from?

III

1. Tze-Kung said: What about me, Ts'ze? Confucius said: You're a dish. "What kind?" Confucius said: Oh, a jewelled one for the altar.

IV

1. Someone said: Yung is a full man but not eloquent. [Persuasive, *ideogram: man tranquillizing a woman.*]

2. He said: How would he use verbal cleverness? Resist men with glibness, it will get you constant detestations from them; how would he use clever talk?

V

On not wishing to be forced into insincerity

1. He was urging Ch'i-tiao to go into government employ, who answered: I couldn't keep my word (if I did). Confucius was pleased. [*Word order:* I this, or thus, is not can stand by my word.]

VI

1. He said: The process is not acted upon [*old style: "the way is not trodden"*]. I will get onto a raft and float at sea and . . .

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eh . . . Yu will follow me. Tsze-lu (Yu) was pleased to hear this. Confucius said: Yu likes audacity more than I do, he wouldn't bother to get the logs (to make his raft).

VII

1. Mang Wu the elder asked if Tze-Lu was a whole man. Confucius said: I don't know.

2. He (Mang) asked again, and Confucius said: In a state of a thousand cars he could manage military enrollment, but I do not know if he is a total man.

3. "What about Ch'iu?" Confucius said: He could govern a city of a thousand families, or a clan mounting a hundred war cars, I do not know if he is all one can ask of a man.

4. "What about Ch'ih?" Confucius said: Ch'ih, in an immaculate sash, could be used to talk to visitors and court guests, I do not know if he is all one can ask of a man.

VIII

1. He asked Tze-Kung: who comprehends most, you or Hui?

2. The answer: No comparison, Hui hears one point and relates it to ten (understands its bearing on ten, I on one only); I hear one point and can only get to the next.

3. He said: Not the same, I agree you are not alike.

IX

1. Tsai Yu was sleeping in day-time. Confucius said: Rotten wood cannot be carved; a wall of dung won't hold plaster, what's the use of reproving him?

2. He said: When I started I used to hear words, and believe they would be acted on; now I listen to what men say and watch what they do. Yu has caused that adjustment.

X

1. He said: I do not see anyone constant. Someone answered: Shan Ch'ang. He said: Ch'ang is moved by his passions, how can he achieve constancy?

XI

1. Tze-Kung said: What I don't want done to me, I don't

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want to do to anyone else. Confucius said: No, Ts'ze, you haven't got that far yet.

XII

1. Tze-Kung said: The big man's culture shows, one can manage to hear about that; the big man's words about the inborn-nature and the process of heaven, one cannot manage to hear. [They don't go in through the ear.]

XIII

1. When Tze-Lu had heard of anything he couldn't practice he was only worried about having heard it. [*Doubtful reading*].

XIV

1. Tze-Kung asked how Kung-Wan got to be called "Wan," the accomplished. Confucius said: He was active, loved study and was not ashamed to question his inferiors, therefore described as "the accomplished."

XV

1. He said to Tze-Ch'an: there are four components in a proper man's doing: He is reverent in his personal conduct, scrupulously honourable in serving his prince, considerate in provisioning the people, and just in employing them.

XVI

1. He said: Yen P'ing understood friendship, however long the intercourse his scruples remained as at first.

XVII

1. He said: Tsang Wan the elder kept a large tortoise; his capitals showed depicted mountains, and the little columns were adorned as if with duckweed; just what sort of knowledge had he? [*Legge's punctuation. Shift the comma and it cd/mean,* dwelt on Tsan (Tortoise) mountain.]

XVIII

1. Tze-Chang asked about Tsze-Wan made minister three times and his face showed no pleasure, retired three times and his face showed no displeasure, felt constrained to tell the new min-

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ister about the old minister's (mode of) governing? Confucius said: a sincere man. (Chang) said: and as to his being the total man? Confucius said: I don't know how he can be called fully human.

2. Ch'ui-tze killed the Ch'i prince, Ch'an Wan had forty teams of horses, he abandoned them and went abroad, coming to another state he said: "They are like the great officer Ch'ui" and departed from that first state, to a second, and again saying: "They are like the great officer Ch'ui," he departed. What about him? Confucius said: pure. (Chang) said: total manhood? Confucius said: I do not know how this can amount to being total manhood.

XIX

1. Chi Wan thought three times before taking action. Confucius heard it and said: Twice might be enough.

XX

1. He said: Ning Wu when the country was well governed behaved as a savant; when the country was in chaos he acted as a simple rustic; one can attain this wisdom but not this simplicity.

XXI

1. When he was in Ch'an he said: Return, let me return. My associates are little children, uppish, shortcutters, versatile and accomplished up to the end of the chapter, but do not know how to moderate.

XXII

1. He said: Po-i and Shu-ch'i did not think about antient hates (birds hidden under the grass), you might say they moulted off their resentments.

XXIII

1. He said: Who calls Wei-shang Kao straight? Somebody begged a little vinegar, and he begged it from a neighbour and gave it him.

XXIV

1. He said: elaborate phrases and expression to fit [L. insin-

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uating, pious appearance] self-satisfied deference; Tso Ch'iu-ming was ashamed of; I also am ashamed of 'em. To conceal resentment while shaking* hands in a friendly manner, Tso-Ch'iu-ming was ashamed to; I also am ashamed to.

XXV

1. Yen Yuan and Tze Lu were with him, he said: Let each of you say what he would like.

2. Tze-Lu said: I would like a car and horses, and light fur clothes that I could share with my friends. They could spoil 'em without offense.

3. Yen Yuan said: I should like goodness without aggressiveness and to put energy into doing a good job without making a show of it.

4. Tze-Lu said: Now, boss, I should like to hear your bent. Confucius said: that the aged have quiet, and friends rely on our words, and that the young be cherished.

XXVI

1. He said: is this the end of it? I have seen no one who can see his errors and then go into his own mind and demand justice on them in precise, just, discriminating words.

XXVII

1. He said: a village with ten homes will contain sincere men who stand by their word quite as well as I do, but no one so in love with study.

BOOK SIX

I

1. He said: Yung could be appointed to a throne [*idiom:* south face].

2. Ching-kung asked about Tze-sang Po-tze. Confucius said: Can do. [Able, handy.]

3. Chang-kung said: if a man's home address is reverence

*This is the picture, L. and P. stick to the dictionary simply, *appearing friendly.*

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he can be easy going, and thereby come near the people, that's permissible? But if his basic address is: take it easy and he carries that into action, it will be too much of a take-it-easy.

4. Confucius said: Yung has the word for it.

[*Note: the terminology in some of these very short verses must be discussed between students, no one version can be just swallowed.*]

II

1. The Duke Ai asked which of the young fellows loved study.

2. Confucius replied: There was Yen Hui who loved to study, he didn't shift a grudge or double an error [L. repeat a fault]. Not lucky, short life, died and the pattern is lost, I don't hear of anyone who likes study.

III

1. Tze Hwa was commissioned to Ch'i, Mr. Zan asked grain for his mother. He said: give a fu. He asked for more. He said give a bushel. Zan gave five ping. [*L. note figures it may have been the whole of his own grain allowance.*]

2. Ch'ih was going to Ch'i, with a team of fat horses, and wearing light fox fur, I have heard that gentlemen aid the distressed, not that they tie up with riches. [L.M.: add to wealth of rich.]

3. Yuan Sze being made governor, declined 900 measures of grain given him.

4. Confucius said: Don't, they could be given to your big and little hamlets, villages, towns.

IV

1. He said in reference to Ching-kung: if the spotted cow's calf be red with the right sort of horn, though men won't want to use it, will the mountains and rivers reject it?

V

1. He said: Hui, now, a mind that for three months wouldn't

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transgress humanity; the rest of 'em, can reach this pattern for a day or a month, and that's all. [*L. probably better:* get to it in a day or a moon, and that's all, *i.e.*, get there but not stick.]

VI

1. Chi K'ang asked if Chung-yu could be appointed as colleague in government. Confucius said: Yu's a determined fellow, what would be the trouble about his carrying on the government work? (K'ang) asked if Ts'ze could be given a government appointment. Said: Ts'ze's intelligent (penetrating) why not? (K'ang) said: and Ch'iu? Said: Ch'iu's versatile, what's against his doing government work?

VII

(On declining to serve an evil overlord.)

1. The Head of Chi appointed Min Tze-chien governor of Pi. Min Tze-chien said: Kindly decline for me, and if they come back for me I shall have to (go) live up over the Wan.

VIII

1. Po-niu was ill. Confucius went to ask after him and took hold of his hand through the window. Said: he's lost, it is destiny, such a man, and to have such a disease. Such a man, such a disease.

IX

1. He said: Hui had solid talent (merit). One bamboo dish of rice, one ladle full of drink, living in a wretched lane, others couldn't have stood it. Hui continued to enjoy (life) unaltered, that's how solid his talent was.

X

1. Yen Ch'iu said: It's not that I don't like your system, I haven't the strength for it. He said: If a man isn't strong enough he stops half way, you shut yourself in (draw your own limit. M. 2222).

XI

1. He said to Tze-Hsia: Observe the phenomena of nature

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as one in whom the ancestral voices speak, don't just watch in a mean way.

XII

1. When Tze-Yu was governor of Wu-ch'ang, he said to him: Got any men there, what about 'em? Answered: Got Tan-t'ai Mieh-ming who never takes a short cut and never comes to my office except when he has government business.

XIII

1. He said: Mang Chih-fan doesn't brag. He was in the rear of a retreat, but when nearing the (city) gate, whipped up his horse and said: not courage keeping me back, horse wouldn't go.

XIV

1. He said: if you haven't the smooth tongue of T'o the prayer-master, or Sung Chao's beauty, it's hard to get away with it in this generation.

XV

1. He said: The way out is via the door, how is it that no one will use this method.

XVI

1. He said: More solidity than finish, you have the rustic; more finish than solid worth, the clerk; accomplishment and solidity as two trees growing side by side and together with leafage and the consequence is the proper man.

XVII

1. He said: men are born upright, if they tangle this inborn nature, they are lucky to escape.

XVIII

1. He said: Those who know aren't up to those who love; nor those who love, to those who delight in.

XIX

1. He said: One can talk of high things (or, of the better

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things) with those who are above mediocrity, with those below mediocrity one cannot.

XX

1. Fan Ch'ih asked about knowing. He said: put your energy into human equities, respect the spirits and powers of the air and keep your distance, that can be called knowing. He asked about humanitas. (Confucius) said: the real man goes first for the difficulty, success being secondary. That you can call manhood.

XXI

1. He said: the wise delight in water, the humane delight in the hills. The knowing are active; the humane, tranquil; the knowing get the pleasure, and the humane get long life.

XXII

1. He said: If Ch'i could make one change it would come up to Lu; if Lu could achieve one change it would arrive at the right way to do things.

XXIII

1. He said: a cornered dish without corners; what sort of a cornered dish is that?

XXIV

1. Tsai Wo said: If you yell: "well-hole" [*Both L. and M. say: meaning, "a man down it"*], will the proper man go down after him? He said: why? a proper man would come to the edge, he can't (be expected to) sink; he can be cheated, but not entrapped.

[It is not up to him to go down it. *Why not the literal:* If they tell him manhood is at the bottom of the well, will he go down after it? *a simple pun on the spoken word* jen[2] *without the graph.*]

XXV

1. He said: A proper man extends his study of accomplishment, he brings it into close definition for the rites, and that may

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enable him to keep from divagations (from overstepping the edge of the field).

XXVI

1. He went to see (the duchess) Nan-tze. Tse-Lu was displeased. The big man said: Well I'll be damned, if there's anything wrong about this, heaven chuck me.

XXVII

1. He said: the pivot that does not wobble (what it's all about, always); looking into the mind and then doing; attain this? Few men have for long.

XXVIII

1. Tze-Kung said: if a man extend wide benefits to the people and aid them all [*pictorially:* sees that they all get an even or constant water supply] would you call that manhood? He said: why attribute that to manhood, he would have to be a sage, Yao and Shun were still worried about such things. [*Or:* at fault, unable to accomplish all that.]

2. The complete man wants to build up himself in order to build up others; to be intelligent (see through things) in order to make others intelligent.

3. To be able to take the near for analogy, that may be called the square of humanitas, and that's that.

BOOK SEVEN

Shu Erh

I

1. He said: Transmitting not composing, standing by the word and loving the antient [L. antients]. I might get by in old P'ang's class.

II

1. He said: like a dog by a spent camp-fire (i.e., silent or dark) remembering, studying and not satiate [*pictogrammically same dog under shelter. The "remembering" is specifically keep-*

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ing the right tone of the word. Various signs containing dog cover the various emotions of dog in given conditions, and are oriented by context], teaching others without being weary, how can these things apply to me?

III

1. He said: To see into one's mind and not measure acts to it; to study and not analyse [*rt/hand component also in verb "to plough"*], to hear equity and not have the gumption to adjust (oneself to it), to be wrong and unable to change, that's what worries me.

IV

1. When dining at home, he was unbent, easy-like, with a smile-smile. [*P. charmingly;* ses manières étaient douces et persuasives! que son air etait affable et prévenant!]

V

1. He said: deep my decadence, I haven't for a long time got back to seeing the Duke of Chou in my dreams.

VI

1. He said: keep your mind (will, directio voluntatis) on the process (the way things function).
2. Grab at clarity in acting on inwit as a tiger lays hold of a pig.
3. That outward acts comply with manhood.
4. Relax in the cultural arts.

VII

1. He said: from the fellow bringing his flitch of dried meat upward, I have never refused to teach (anyone).

VIII

1. He said: not zeal not explain [*slightly more inclusive than L.'s* I do not explain to anyone who is not eager], not wishing to speak, not manifesting. [*L. M. slant it to equivalents of:* I don't show it to anyone who won't put his own cards on the table.] I hold up one corner (of a subject) if he cannot turn the other three, I do not repeat (come back to the matter).

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IX

1. When eating beside someone in mourning he did not stuff himself.

2. He did not sing on the same day he had mourned.

X

1. He said to Yen Yuan: When in office keep to the edge of its duties; when out, don't meddle (keep under the grass), only I and you have this sense.

2. Tze-Lu said: if you were in charge of the three army corps whom would you take for associate?

3. He said: Not someone who would tackle a tiger barehanded or cross a stream without boats and die without regret. Not on the staff; but a man who keeps both eyes open when approaching an action, who likes to plan and bring to precision.

XI

1. He said: If I could get rich by being a postillion I'd do it; as one cannot, I do what I like.

XII

1. The things he looked very straight at, were the arrangement of altar dishes, war and disease.

XIII

1. In Ch'i he heard the "Shao" sung, and for three months did not know the taste of his meat; said: didn't figure the performance of music had attained to that summit.

XIV

1. Yen Yu said: is the big man for the Lord of Wei? Tze-Kung said: I'll ask him.

2. Went in and said: What sort of chaps were Po-i and Chu-Ch'i? Confucius said: Antients of solid merit.

"(Did they) regret it?"

(Confucius) said: they sought manhood, and reached manhood, how could they regret after that?

(Tze-Kung) came out and said: He's not for him. (No go. Not business, won't work.)

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XV

1. He said: a meal of rough rice to eat, water, to drink, bent arm for a pillow, I can be happy in such condition, riches and honours got by injustice seem to me drifting clouds.

XVI

1. He said: If many years were added to me, I would give fifty to the study of The Book of the Changes, and might thereby manage to avoid great mistakes.

XVII

1. [L.: What he constantly talked of, *but ya*[3] *means also* elegant.] He frequently spoke of (and kept refining his expression about) the Odes, the Historic Documents, the observance of rites (ceremonial, correct procedure) all frequently (or polished) in his talk.

XVIII

1. The Duke of Sheh asked Tze-Lu about Confucius; Tze-Lu did not answer.

2. He said: Couldn't you have said: He's so keen and eager he forgets to eat, so happy he forgets his troubles and doesn't know age is coming upon him?

XIX

1. He said: I wasn't born knowing; love antiquity (the antients), actively investigating.

XX

1. He did not expatiate on marvels, feats of strength, disorder or the spirits of the air.

XXI

1. He said: three of us walking along, perforce one to teach me, if he gets it right, I follow, if he errs, I do different.

XXII

1. He said: Heaven gave me my conscience, what can Hwan T'ui do to me.

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XXIII

1. He said: You two or three, do I hide anything from you? I do not hide anything from you, I don't go along and not give it you, that's me. (You are getting the real Ch'iu, Confucius-Hillock.)

XXIV

1. He taught by four things: literature, procedure, sincerity (middle-heart) and standing by his word. [P. *rather better:* employait quatre sortes d'enseignements. Taught by means of four things.]

XXV

1. He said: I have not managed to see a sage man. If I could manage to see a proper man (one in whom the ancestral voices function) that would do.

2. He said: A totally good man, I have not managed to see. If I could see a constant man (consistent, a "regular fellow") that would do.

3. To lack and pretend to have, to be empty and pretend to be full, to be tight and pretend to be liberal: hard to attain consistency (in that case).

XXVI

1. He fished but not with a net; shot but not at sitting birds.

XXVII

1. If there are men who start off without knowledge, I don't. I listen a lot and pick out what is balanced, see a lot and keep the tone of the word, and so manage to know.

XXVIII

1. It was bothersome to talk with Hu-hsiang folk, the disciples were worried when Kung received a boy.

2. He said: I give to those who approach, not to those who go away; who is so deep; if a man wash and approach, I give to the clean (or, to his cleanliness) I don't uphold his past (or his future).

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XXIX

1. He said: Manhood, how is it something afar off; I want to be human, and that humanity I get to.

XXX

1. The Minister of Crimes in Ch'an asked Confucius if the Duke Chao knew the correct procedure. Confucius said: he knew the procedure.

2. Confucius went out, and (the Minister) beckoned to Wu-ma Ch'i saying: I hear the gentleman is not prejudiced (partisan) yet he is partisan. The prince married a Wu, of the same surname as (himself) and called her Wu-elder. If that's knowing proper procedure, who don't know procedure?

3. Wu-ma Ch'i reported this. Confucius said: Ch'iu's lucky (i.e., I am lucky). If I make a mistake it's bound to be known.

XXXI

1. If he was with a man who sang true, he would make him repeat and sing in harmony with him.

XXXII

1. He said: I am about up to anyone else in education, it's the personal conduct of a proper man, that's what I don't come up to.

XXXIII

1. He said: As sage, as full man, can I set myself up as a model? I try and don't slack when tired, I teach men without weariness, that's the limit of what you can say of me. Kung-hsi Hwa said: Exactly what we younger chaps can't get by study.

XXIV

1. He was very ill. Tze-Lu asked to pray. He said: Does one? Tze-Lu answered: one does. The Eulogies say: We have prayed for you to the upper and lower spirits venerable. He said: I, Ch'iu, have been praying for a long time.

XXXV

1. He said: extravagance is not a pattern for grandsons;

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parsimony is pattern of obstinacy; better be obstinate than break the line to posterity.

XXXVI

1. He said: the proper man: sun-rise over the land, level, grass, sun, shade, flowing out; the mean man adds distress to distress.

XXXVII

1. He was both mild and precise; grave and not aggressive, reverent and tranquil.

BOOK EIGHT

T'ai Po

I

1. He said of T'ai Po: It can be said that he completely brought his acts up to the level of his inwit; three times refusing the empire, the people could not arrive at weighing the act.

Note: T'ai Po abdicated in favour of his younger brother, Wan's father, in order that Wan might inherit. This because he considered Wan the member of the family capable of delivering the state from the Yin dynasty.

[*Syntactical trouble re/"three times." Wan's father was the third son. The three might mean "in three ways"; for himself, his second brother, and their heirs?*]

II

1. He said: respect without rules of procedure becomes laborious fuss; scrupulosity without rules of procedure, timidity (fear to show the thought) ; boldness without such rules breeds confusion; directness without rules of procedure becomes rude.

2. Gentlemen "bamboo-horse" to their relatives [*The bamboo is both hard on the surface and pliant*] and the people will rise to manhood; likewise be auld (acquaintance) not neglected, the people will not turn mean (pilfer).

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III

1. Tsang-tze was ill; called his disciples saying: uncover my feet, my hands, the Odes say: cautious, tread light as on the edge of a deep gulph, or on thin ice. And now and for the future I know what I am escaping, my children.

IV

1. Tsang-tze was ill, Mang Chang-tze went to enquire.

2. Tsang said: When a bird is about to die, its note is mournful, when a man is about to die, his words are balanced.

3. There are three things a gentleman honours in his way of life: that in taking energetic action he maintain a calm exterior at far remove from over-bearing and sloth, that his facial expression come near to corresponding with what he says, that the spirit of his talk be not mean nor of double-talk. The sacrificial covered splint fruit baskets and altar platters have assistants to look after them.

V

1. Tsang-tze said: Able yet willing to ask those who were not talented, possessed of many things, but enquiring of those who had few, having as though he had not, full and acting as if empty, not squabbling when offended, I once had a friend who followed that service.

VI

1. Tsang-tze said: Fit to be guardian of a six cubits orphan (a prince under 15) in governing a state of an hundred *li* who cannot be grabbed by the approach of great-tallies [ta chieh 795 (e) 6433.30 *must mean something more than L's "any emergency," i.e., must indicate not getting rattled either at nearing the annual report to the overlord, or by the coming near it, i.e., to the chance of appropriating to himself the symbol of power*] a proper man? aye, a man of right breed.

VII

1. Tsang-tze: An officer cannot lack magnanimous courage (boldness of bow-arm) he carries weight on a long journey.

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2. Full manhood in fulfilling his personal duties, is that not weighty, death and then it ends, is not that long?

VIII

1. He said: Aroused by the Odes.
2. Stablished by the rites.
3. Brought into perfect focus by music.

IX

1. He said: People can be made to sprout (produce, act, follow) they cannot be commissioned to know.

X

1. He said: In love with audacity and loathing (sickened at) poverty: (leads to) confusion; when a man's lack of manly qualities is excessively deep that also means disorder.

XI

1. He said: Though a man have the Duke of Chou's brilliant ability, if he be high-horsey and stingy, the rest is not worth looking at.

XII

1. He said: It is not easy to study for three years without some good grain from it.

[*Ideogram* ku; *interesting as meaning both corn and good, or good luck.*]

XIII

1. He said: strong and faithfully loving study [strong, *again the "bamboo-horse":* hard and supple] maintaining till death the balanced, radiant process.
2. As for looking for troubled waters to fish in. Not enter a province on the brink, nor live in a disorganized province; when the empire has the process (is functioning) will be looked at; when it is without organization, will be out of sight.
3. When a state is functioning, poverty and meanness are shameful; when a state is in chaos (ill governed) riches and honours are shameful. [*Let us say:* under a corrupt government.]

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XIV

1. He said: not being in (an) office; not plan its functioning.

XV

1. He said: when Music Master Chih began [L. entered office] the ensemble finale of the fish-hawk song, came wave over wave an ear-full and how!

XVI

1. He said: Uppish and not straight, ignorant and dishonest, [*let us say:* not spontaneous], quite simple and still not keeping their word; I don't make 'em out. [Empty-headed, and not keeping their word.]

XVII

1. He said: study as if unattainable, as if fearing to lose (grip on it).

XVIII

1. He said: lofty as the spirits of the hills and the grain mother, Shun and Yu held the empire, as if not in a mortar with it. [M. 7615, e: as if unconcerned.]

XIX

1. He said: How great was Yao's activity as ruler lofty as the spirits of the hills; only the heavens' working is great, and Yao alone on that pattern, spreading as grass, sunlight and shadow, the people could not find it a name.

2. How marvellous the way he brought his energies to a focus. Brilliant-gleaming? the perfect expression of his statutes.

XX

1. Shun had five men [*emphasis on "men", I think*] for ministers and the empire was governed.

2. King Wu said: I have ten able ministers [*vide* L. *and* M. 4220. a 3.]. [*Unorthodox reading:* King Wu said: I have ten men to serve me in this chaos. M. 4220. 27. I have ten obstreperous, wrong-headed ministers.]

3. Kung-tze said: Talents are really hard to find. The houses of T'ang (Yao) and Yu (in the person of Shun). At the

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time of (Yao of the house of) T'ang and (Shun of) Yu in their plenitude, there was a woman and nine men only.

4. Having two thirds of the empire, by keeping them in service (in the uniform) of Yin, the conscientiousness of Chou can be said to have attained its maximum in action.

XXI

1. He said: I find Yu without flaw, frugal in drinking and eating, showing the utmost filial continuity with the spirits and powers of air, badly dressed ordinarily, but absolutely elegant in sacrificial black and blue robes and sovran-cap (mortar board), an inferior palace for a house, he put all his energy into the irrigation and drainage (aqueducts and ditches), I find him utterly flawless.

BOOK NINE

Tze Han

I

1. He seldom spoke of profits, destiny, and total manhood.

II

1. A villager from Ta-Hsiang said: Great man, Kung-tze extends his studies but does nothing to bring his reputation to a point.

2. Confucius heard this and asked his young students: what should I do, take up charioteering or take up archery? I'll take up charioteering.

III

1. He said: The ceremonial hemp cap is now silk; that's an economy, I conform.

2. Bowing as you enter the hall is according to the rites, they now bow when they have come up the hall, cheeky; although against the common usage, I conform [or continue (to bow)] at the lower end of the hall.

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IV

1. He was cut off from four things; he had no prejudices, no categoric imperatives, no obstinacy or no obstinate residues, no time-lags, no egotism.

V

1. He was alarmed in Kwang.
2. Said: King Wan has passed on, the wan (the precise knowledge) is rooted here?
3. If heaven were about to destroy that spirit of precision, after Wan's death, it would not have lasted on and been given to me. If heaven is not about to destroy that spirit, what are the people of Kwang to me? [L.: what can they do to me?]

VI

1. A great minister said to Tze-kung: your big man is a sage, how versatile he is.
2. Tze-kung said: Aye, by heaven's indulgence is almost a sage, and also very versatile.
3. Confucius heard, and said: does the great minister know me? I was poor when young and therefore can do many things, humble jobs. Need a proper man, a gentleman, be versatile? He need not.
4. Lao says He said: I was not trained (educated to the examinations)* and therefore learned the various arts.

VII

1. He said: How do I grasp knowledge? I am not wise, but if a plain man ask me, empty as empty [like? work in a cave?], [L:] I set it forth from one end to the other and exhaust it.

["*Knock at double," or at both starts or principles, suggests the meaning:* investigate the paradox, or the two principles, the conjunction, apparent contradiction, and then exhaust the question.]

VIII

1. He said: the miracle bird has not arrived, the river gives forth no map (of turtle-shell), I've only myself to rely on.

*L.: having no official job.

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IX

1. Seeing anyone in mourning or in full ceremonial dress and cap, or a blind man (one of the blind musicians) even though they were young he would rise, or, passing, pass quickly.

X

1. Yen Yuan sighed heavily and said: I looked up, they filled the aloft; I bored in to them and they were totally solid; respectfully standing before them, they suddenly took root-hold in consequence.

2. The big man, orderly, one point tied to another, with perfect balance induces men (words that grow as easily as weed, but are good, grain-words), he enlarges us with literature, and keeps us in bound by the rites.

> "*Rites*": *This word* li[3] *contains something of the idea in the french* "il sait vivre," *though it would be an exaggeration to say that one can always render it by that phrase.*

3. Wishing to finish, I cannot; having exhausted my talent, it is as if something was built up lofty; although I wish to comply with it, there is no way (to do so completely) (branch causes stop).

XI

1. He was very ill, Tze-Lu wanted the students to act as ministers.

2. In an interval of the fever He said: Yu (Tze-lu) has been being too-clever for a long time, whom would I fool by pretending to have ministers when I haven't: fool heaven?

3. Wouldn't it be better to die among two or three intimates than in ministers' hands? Might not have a big funeral, but I wouldn't just die in a ditch [*lit:* going along a road].

XII

1. Tze-kung said: I have a beautiful gem here; put it in a case and hoard it, or try to get a good price and sell it? He said: sell it, sell it, I wait for its price.

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XIII

1. He was wanting to live among the wild tribes.

2. Someone said: Rough, vulgar, how do you mean? He said: if the right kind of man lived there, how would they stay so?

XIV

(Arrangement of the Song book)

1. He said: From Wei I came back to Lu and the music was put in order, the Elegantiae and the Lauds were each put in its proper place.

XV

1. He said: In public to be useful to the Dukes and Ministers, in private to be useful to one's father and elder brothers, not daring to neglect the service of dead; not to be obstinate with drink; how does this apply to me?

XVI

1. Standing on a river-bank he said: it is what passes like that, indeed, not stopping day, night.

XVII

1. I do not see love of looking into the mind and acting on what one sees there to match love of someone having beauty.

XVIII

I do not in the least understand the text of this chapter. Only guess at it I can make is:

1. He said: As a mountain (grave-mound) is not made perfect by one basket of earth; yet has position, I take position. If you dump one basket of earth on a level plain it is a start (toward the heap?), I make that start.

The chapter might conceivably refer to determining the proper site for a tumulus even if one could not complete it. L. unsatisfied as to meaning, and P. unsatisfactory.

XIX

1. He said: Never inert in conversation, that was Hui.

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XX

1. He described Yen Yuan: Alas, I see him advance, I never see him stop (take a position).

Putting the accent on the hsi (2-5), *"a pity?" as Legge does not.*

There is no more important technical term in the Confucian philosophy than this chih (3) *the hitching post, position, place one is in, and works from. Turn back also to the difficult chap. xviii. above.*

XXI

1. He said: There are sprouts that do not flower; flowers that come not to fruit, oh yes.

XXII

1. He said: You can respect 'em soon after birth, how can one know what will come up to present record; at forty or fifty and not heard (or if they don't hear sense) that (maturity) just isn't enough to respect.

XXIII

1. He said: can one help agreeing with talk of sound doctrine? It's the altering to enact that matters; can one fail to be pleased with south-east gentleness of discourse, it's the elucidation that matters. To be pleased and not elucidate (not understand), to assent but not act on. I just don't know how to take (that sort).

XXIV

1. He said: put first getting to the centre of the mind, and keeping one's word; no friends not like one; when a mistake is made, not fearing to change.

XXV

1. He said: the commander of three army corps can be kidnapped, you cannot kidnap a plain man's will.

XXVI

1. Standing by a man dressed in furs, unembarrassed, Yu could do that?

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2. No hates, no greeds, how can he use evil means?

3. Tze-lu kept repeating this to himself. Confucius said: How can that be enough for complete goodness?

XXVII

1. He said: when the year goes a-cold we know pine and cypress, then you can carve them.

XXVIII

1. He said: the wise are not flustered, the humane are not melancholy, the bold are not anxious.*

XXIX

1. He said: there are some we can study with, but cannot accompany in their mode of action; there are some we can collaborate with, but cannot build sound construction with, some we can construct with but not agree with as to the significance of what we are doing.

XXX

1. The flowers of the prunus japonica deflect and turn, do I not think of you dwelling afar?

2. He said: It is not the thought, how can there be distance in that?

BOOK TEN

Heang Tang
(*villeggiatura*)

I

1. Kung-tze in his village, looking as if he were too simple-hearted to utter.

2. In the dynastic temple, or court, speaking with easy pertinence; answering with prompt respect.

II

1. At court with the Lower-great officers straight from the shoulder; with the Upper-great officials with gentle courtesy.

*These are definitions of words.

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2. With the sovran present, level alertness, grave readiness.

III

1. On the Prince calling him to receive a visitor, his face registered a change and his legs flexed.

2. He saluted (the officers whom he was standing with), left and right hand, his robe fore and aft evenly adjusted.

3. Swiftly advanced as if winged.

4. The visitor gone, it was his duty to report saying: the guest does not look back.

IV

1. *Entering the ducal gate he hunched up like a ball as if there* wasn't room.

2. Did not stand in the middle of the gateway, nor tread on the threshold-stone door-sill in going out.

3. Passing the sovran's standing place his expression changed and his legs seemed to flex, he spoke as if short of breath.

4. He went up the hall, he held his breath as if not breathing.

5. Coming out, when he had descended one step, his face relaxed to a pleasant expression, from the bottom of the steps he moved quickly, as if winged, to his place, still cagey on his feet.

V

1. Carrying the sceptre his body was bent as if it were too heavy to lift, the upper part at the level of the salute, the lower as when handing over something. His face grim, and his feet as if tethered.

2. Giving the ceremonial gifts, his face placid.

3. In private audience, as if enjoying it.

VI

1. Gentlemen do not (or the gentleman did not) wear dark purple puce ornaments.

2. Nor red purple in undress [*can also mean "mourning clothes"*].

3. Approximately in hot weather an unlined dress of linen or grass cloth must show and appear [L. over his underwear].

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4. Black silk dress, lambskin; white dress fawn-skin; yellow dress fox fur.

5. Undress fur coat long with short sleeve [L. short right sleeve].

6. Had to have night gown half again as long as his body.

7. At home thick fox and badger fur.

8. Discarding mourning put all the gadgets on his belt.

9. Lower garments, except aprons, cut in (to the waist).

10. Lamb skin and black cap not used on visits of condolence.

11. At beginning of the month would always go to court in court dress.

VII

1. When fasting insisted on bright linen clothes.

2. For fasting had to change his diet, sit in a different place.

VIII

1. Couldn't get rice too clean or mince too fine for him.

2. Would not eat mouldy rice or fish or meat that had gone off, nor would he eat anything that had changed colour, stank, was ill cooked or out of season.

3. Did not eat meat badly cut or with the wrong sauce.

4. When there was a lot of meat he would not take more than what properly went with the rice, only in matter of wine was no blue nose (set no limit) but didn't get fuddled.

5. Did not take wine or eat dried meat from the market.

6. Always had ginger at table.

7. Didn't eat a great deal [or a lot of different things at a time?].

8. Did not keep the meat from the ducal sacrifices over night; nor that of the domestic sacrifice more than three days. It is not eaten after three days.

9. Did not talk while eating nor in bed.

10. Although but coarse rice or vegetable broth he would offer decorously a gourd (ladle-full) in sacrifice.

IX

1. Not sit on a mat askew.

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X

1. With villagers drinking, when the old fellows with canes went out, he followed.

2. When the villagers drive out the devils in winter, he put on court robes and stood on his east steps.

XI

1. On occasion of messengers from another state (or to it) he bowed twice and escorted the messenger out.

2. Chi K'ang made him a present of medicine, he bowed and accepted it, saying: I don't know how far it goes, I don't dare take it.

XII

1. The stable burned while he was away at court, he said: Any of the men hurt? not asking about the horses.

XIII

1. On the prince sending food, he would adjust his mat and taste it before anyone else; the prince sending raw food he would cook it and set it before the spirits inviting them; if the prince sent him a live animal he would put it to pasture.

2. In service of the prince at a feast, the prince sacrificed, first tasting.

Not clear, but L. evidently correct that Confucius acted as taster, either for prince, or for the spirits.

3. Being ill, the prince came to see him, he set his head to the east and had his court robes spread over him, his belt across them.

4. When summoned by sovran order, he did not wait for the team to be hitched, he went on foot.

XIV

1. Entering the great dynastic temple he asked about all details of the service.

XV

1. When a friend died with no one to return (the body to its home for burial) he said: I will see to the funeral.

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2. If a friend sent a present, though it were a carriage and pair, he did not bow, but only for a present of sacrificial meat.

XVI

1. In bed did not lie in the pose of a corpse; at home no formal manners.

2. Seeing anyone in mourning, although a familiar, he would change (his expression); seeing anyone in ceremonial cap, or blind, although he himself were in slops, he would salute with ceremony.

3. To a person in mourning he would bow over the dash-board. He would bow over the dash-board to anyone carrying the census tablets.

4. He would rise and bow with different expression at a feast with a loaded table.

5. He would change expression at sudden thunder or a keen gust of wind.

XVII

1. To get into the carriage he would stand plumb and take hold of the cord.

2. In the carriage he did not twist his head around, gabble, or point.

XVIII

1. "Beauty: That which arises, hovers, then comes to nest."

2. He said: Mountain ridge, the hen pheasant, the ringed pheasant the season, how! It is the season! Tze-lu [??] showed respect [3709 a ?], thrice smelled and rose. [? thrice inhaled the mountain air?]

Difficult as to the number of times the hen pheasant "hsiu" *scented. Commentators in general give it up.*

P. apparently tries to connect the verse with the yellow bird that knows where to rest. Great Learning III, 2.

(*Part II of* The Analects *will be published in subsequent issues.*)

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Letters of Ezra Pound[1]

Edited by D. D. PAIGE

I. TO T. S. ELIOT CONCERNING *THE WASTE LAND*

[*In several places and over a period of years Eliot has written of Pound's maieutic efforts in connection with* The Waste Land. *The history of these efforts, until now obscure, may be reconstructed somewhat as follows. After Eliot had completed, in the fall or winter of* 1921, *the draft of what he has described as a "sprawling chaotic poem," he visited Pound in Paris. There he submitted the poem to his friend's inspection and criticism. Following Pound's suggestions, he reduced the poem to about half its original size. These revisions, made upon the draft, are now presumably lost. The only evidence, at the moment, which reveals the quality and extent of this rare example of sympathetic criticism is in the following letters, exchanged after Eliot had returned to London. They dispose of final problems in regard to the poem and amply bear out Eliot's statement that Pound "tried first to understand what one was attempting to do and then tried to help one do it in one's own way."*]

1: Ezra Pound to T. S. Eliot

Paris *24 Saturnus, An 1, < 24 December 1921 >*

Caro mio: MUCH improved. I think your instinct had led you to put the remaining superfluities at the end. I think you had better leave 'em, abolish 'em altogether or for the present.

[1]The two following groups of letters are taken from a selection of Ezra Pound's correspondence soon to be published by Faber and Faber in London and by Harcourt, Brace in New York. Thanks are due T. S. Eliot for permission to print his letter to Ezra Pound.

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IF you MUST keep 'em, put 'em at the beginning before the "April cruelest month." The POEM ends with the "Shantih, shantih, shantih."

One test is whether anything would be lacking if the last three were omitted. I don't think it would.

The song has only two lines which you can use in the body of the poem. The other two, at least the first, does not advance on earlier stuff. And even the sovegna doesn't hold with the rest; which does hold.

(It also, to your horror probably, reads aloud very well. Mouthing out his OOOOOOze.)

I doubt if Conrad is weighty enough to stand the citation.

The thing now runs from "April . . ." to "shantih" without a break. That is 19 pages, and let us say the longest poem in the Englisch langwidge. Don't try to bust all records by prolonging it three pages further.

The bad nerves is O.K. as now led up to.

My squibs are now a bloody impertinence. I send 'em as requested; but don't use 'em with *Waste Land*.

You can tack 'em onto a collected edtn, or use 'em somewhere where they would be decently hidden and swamped by the bulk of accompanying matter. They'd merely be an extra and wrong note with the 19 page version.

Complimenti, you bitch. I am wracked by the seven jealousies, and cogitating an excuse for always exuding my deformative secretions in my own stuff, and never getting an outline. I go into nacre and objets d'art. Some day I shall lose my temper, blaspheme Flaubert, lie like a * * * * and say "Art should embellish the umbelicus."

Sage Homme

These are the poems of Eliot
By the Uranian Muse begot;
A Man their Mother was,
A Muse their Sire.

How did the printed Infancies result
From Nuptials thus doubly difficult?

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If you must needs enquire
Know diligent Reader
That on each Occasion
Ezra performed the caesarean Operation.

-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-

Cauls and grave clothes he brings,
Fortune's outrageous stings,
About which odour clings,
Of putrefaction,
Bleichstein's dank rotting clothes
Affect the dainty nose,
He speaks of common woes
Deploring action.

He writes of A.B.C.s
And flaxseed poultices,
Observing fate's hard decrees
Sans satisfaction;
Breedings of animals,
Humans and cannibals,
But above all else of smells
Without attraction

Vates cum fistula

* * * *

It is after all a grrrreat litttttttterary period.
Thanks for the Aggymemnon.

[*Early in January Eliot sent Pound the following letter, to which the latter added marginal notes (here indicated in bracketed italics) and which he apparently returned to Eliot as an enclosure with letter number* 3.]

2: T. S. Eliot to Ezra Pound

London < *? January* > *1922*

Cher maître: Criticisms accepted so far as understood, with thanks.

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Glowed on the marble where the glass
Sustained by standards wrought with fruited vines
Wherefrom . . .?? [*O.K.*]

Footsteps shuffled on the stair . . . [*O.K.*]

A closed car. I can't use taxi more than once. [*O.K.*]

Departed, *have* left no addresses . . .??? [*O.K.*]

What does THENCE mean (To luncheon at the Cannon St. Hotel) ???

Would D's difficulty be solved by inverting to

Drifting logs
The barges wash . . . ???

1. Do you advise printing "Gerontion" as prelude in book or pamphlet form?
2. Perhaps better omit Phlebas also???
3. Wish to use Caesarean Operation in italics in front.
4. Certainly omit miscellaneous pieces. [*Those at end.*]
5. Do you mean not use the Conrad quote or simply not put Conrad's name to it? It is much the most appropriate I can find, and somewhat elucidative.

Complimenti appreciated, as have been excessively depressed.

* * * *

I would have sent Aeschyle before but have been in bed with flu, now out, but miserable.

Would you advise working sweats with tears, etc., into nerves monologue; only place where it can go?

Have writ to Thayer[2] asking what he can offer for this.

Trying to read Aristophane.

3: Ezra Pound to T. S. Eliot

Paris < ? *January* > *1922*

Filio dilecto mihi: I merely queeried the dialect of "thence"; dare say it is O.K.

[2]Scofield Thayer, editor of *The Dial.*

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D. was fussing about some natural phenomenon, but I thought I had crossed out her queery. The wake of the barges washes etc., and the barges may perfectly well be said to wash. I should leave it as it is, and NOT invert.

I do not advise printing "Gerontion" as preface. One don't miss it *at* all as the thing now stands. To be more lucid still, let me say that I advise you NOT to print "Gerontion" as prelude.

I DO advise keeping Phlebas. In fact I more'n advise. Phlebas is an integral part of the poem; the card pack introduces him, the drowned phoen. sailor. And he is needed ABSOLOOTLY where he is. Must stay in.

Do as you like about my obstetric effort.

Ditto re Conrad; who am I to grudge him his laurel crown?

Æschylus not so good as I had hoped, but haven't had time to improve him, yet.

I dare say the sweats with tears will wait. * * * *

You can forward the "Bolo" to Joyce if you think it won't unhinge his somewhat sabbatarian mind. On the hole he might be saved the shock, shaved the sock.

You will remember (or if not remind me of) the occasion when the whole company arose as one man and burst out singing "Gawd save the Queen." The anti-lynch law (postlude of mediaeval right to scortum ante mortem) has I see been passed to the great glee of the negro spectators in the congressional art gallery.

Dere z also de stoory of the poker game, if you hab forgotten it.

II. TO W. H. D. ROUSE CONCERNING *THE ODYSSEY*

[*In 1934 W. H. D. Rouse, an editor of the Loeb Classical Library, prepared a translation of the* Odyssey *for schoolboys. This version, in which the "story" emerged with such salience, came under Pound's eye and he thought he saw in Dr. Rouse a translator who might "establish one dimension* [i.e., *that of narrative*

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movement] *of the* Odyssey." *On 30 December 1934, he wrote to Rouse: "Can you augment it? Can you keep the drive of the narration and yet put back some of what you have skipped? What happens if you go through it again, making as straight a tale for adults?" Rouse evidently set to work immediately, for in February 1935 he sent Pound the first draft of his new translation of Book I of the Odyssey.*]

1.

Rapallo *22 February 1935*

Dear Dr. Rouse: A week or ten days ago I made some notes on yr. first book but did not send them because I thought:

I. Most important thing is that you finish the new translation in your own way and own spirit, uncontaminated.

II. In any poem of length the *first* essential is the narrative flow. My stickings and probings might bother you.

Now Mairet[3] writes me he has written you saying he thinks he can use the stuff *now*, about a page a week, starting next month (which I suppose means March).

I am therefore sending you the ms. sep. cov. registered.

2.

Rapallo *February 1935*

Dear Dr. Rouse: To come down to trifles, or perhaps they aren't. Certain words seem to me "literary," no longer living, no longer *used* in speech as I heard it during my 12 years in England. Never have I heard the word "flight" spoken, though one reads it in detective stories.

Poor old Upward[4] had a lot to say about Athene's eyes, connecting them with her owl and with olive trees. The property of the glaux, and olive leaf, to shine and then not to shine, "glint" rather than shine. Certainly a more living word if one lives among olive yards.

[3]An editor of *The New English Weekly*.

[4]Allen Upward, whom Pound introduced to America in the pages of *Poetry*.

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I wonder if those blighters have sent you my *XXX*, or if they are waiting for the new 31/41. . . .

Do we say "courteous," or do we say people have "good" or "nice" manners?

"Kind sir, will you be angry" seems to me fairy tale. "Pardon me, sir, but I hope you won't be offended". . . .

Is it English or American to say "Is it yr. first visit" or "Is *this* yr. first visit"?

I don't know that one needs keep "Allow me to inform you" where the next phrase is clear, and the tone of voice carries the meaning (178).

"Oh well" not "Ah well."

I don't see that one *translates* by leaving in unnecessary words; that is, words not necessary to the meaning of the *whole* passage, any whole passage. An author uses a certain number of *blank* words for the timing, the movement, etc., to make his work sound like natural speech. I believe one shd. check up all that verbiage as say 4% *blanks*, to be used where and when wanted in the translation, but perhaps never, or at any rate not usually where the original author has used them.

Alas, as you are writing English, you can't call *them there bloody* gallants "cake-eaters" or "lizards," "dudes," "gigolos," "young scum" (I suppose my native tongue is still more flexible than English: "good for nothing young sprigs," "fils à papa," "spooners," "saps").

P. 13.A. Won't all the *meaning* go into: "And put twenty oarsmen into the best ship you can find."

When I suggested your doing a translation with *all* the meaning, I didn't mean merely put back *words*, or translations for words.

I thought that passage about Odysseus on the mast, under the cliffs, has more boy scout craft than you gave it. I thought the situation of Mercury and Calypso has more *inside* it.

????

"And Antinous Eupertheson answered: 'Telemachus has apparently spoken with one of the gods, and learned a great deal of

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rhetoric. I hope he will inherit the throne of his father's in Ithaca.' "

No use: I can't fit my sentences into your cadence, but the only way I can express what I am driving at is to put down some sort of scaffolding.

" 'Much as the idea may annoy you, I wd. accept it,' said Telemachus. 'There's no harm in being a king. Kings accumulate property, and are greatly respected. There are other Greek kings, one of them, a young one or even an old one might succeed the noble Odysseus, if Odysseus were dead, but in that case I shd. at least be master in my own house.' "

I wonder if the word "canny" (kenn?) wdn't be a useful word here and there.

The *theioio:* Not sure you don't shock *me* for a change.

What about Zeus saying: "How can I forget Odysseus, the fellow is one of us," or "How can I forget Odysseus, who is one of us, one of our own kind," or "almost one of us."

"A man with a mind like that comes near to godhead"; "when a man's got a mind like that even the gods respect him" ("can respect").

3.

Rapallo *18 March 1935*

NO, NO! Doc: Here you are backslidin' on all your highly respectable principles and slinging in licherary langwidg and puttin' yer sentences all out of whack.

"Odysseus' boy jumped out of bed as rednailed etc. appeared thru the dawn mist," or whatever; and if he reached for his six-shooter before puttin' on his boots, *that* is a point to be made, as highly illustrative of the era. A guards officer wdn't. But I reckon in Idaho in the 80's Blue Dick or Curly might have. And for his feet, they ought to be well-kept, or elegant or patrician, otherwise they slide into book-talk.

Tain't what a man sez, but wot he *means* that the traducer has got to bring over. The *implication* of the word.

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As fer them feet, the blighter had been usin cold cream, the bloomin' Bloomsburry knutt! * * * *

I will discuss eagles with my venerable parent, as he remembers when an Injun brought old Abe into Chippewa. That eagle went thru the Civil War and is supposed to have squawked above battles and come home with the regiment and been stuffed and then burnt when the Wisconsin capital burned.

What about magic and augury and luck-finding eagle feather? I am bone ignorant of the subject, but have vague feeling that something or other, etc. . . .

I think the *openings* of the books need especial care. This first page of book two is *bad*. I mean it is just translation of words, without your imagining the scene and event *enough*, and without attending to the English idiom. The "THOKOS," I suppose central chair, if more than one; king's chair.

People have been trying to translate this for 400 years. Can't be done easy. Very definite sense: Telemachus growing up and asserting himself. It is the vividness and rapidity of narration, three little scenes, all alive. That is *writing*. I just don't think you've yet got it. At any rate I'd like to see a "rewrite" as if you didn't know the *words* of the original and were telling what happened.

Excuse this firmness, but hang it, anything else wd. be waste of both our time.

4.

Rapallo *17 April 1935*

I don't know that I have been clear enough re *recurrable* epithets —either to be simple and natural so that repeat don't worry one, or else strange and part of definite intended stylization.

Glaux, owl, totem or symbolic bird (gods connected with the divine animals, as stupid bitch Hera has her bull eyes), glare-eyed, owl-eyed Athena.

The Apollo at Villa Giulia gives tip to Mediterranean gods; startling, sudden, none of that washy late stuff done by sculpting

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slave models, nor afternoon-tea Xtian piety. Gods tricky as nature.

"Wine dark" I shd. accept. It is outside northern belief, but tells something about Mediterranean water that has to be seen.

Blond Menelaus: small dark Pelasgians or Mediterraneans still believe in cuckolding large Nordic fatheads. Cucufier un anglais, etc. At any rate, he has blond temperament, not redhead but note that as language you can repeat carrot-top, sorrel-top, reddy, whereas hair colours sound literary. As black-headed, etc.

The Nordic Menelaus. As to character of Odysseus. Anything but the bright little Rollo of *Chamber's Journal* brought up on Sam Smiles. Born un po' misero, don't want to go to war, little runt who finally has to do all the hard work, gets all Don Juan's chances with the ladies and can't really enjoy 'em. Circe, Calypso, Nausicaa. Always some fly in the ointment, last to volunteer on stiff jobs.

5.

Rapallo *April 1935*

Dear Dr. Rouse: Sorry, but I am afraid I think the start of V. just plain damn bad. Careless, frivolous. Missed opportunities *all* over it.

Let's list the aims:

1. Real speech *in* the English version.
2. Fidelity to the original
   a. meaning
   b. atmosphere

No need of keeping verbal literality for phrases which sing and run naturally in the original. But, the THEOIO is strong magic.

The Argicide, Hermes, carried past, the movement with the wind takes the god into nature. It is raw cut of concrete reality combined with the tremendous energy, the contact with the natural force. The reality that becomes mere pompous rhetoric in Milton. The miracle of Homer is that great poesy is everywhere latent and that the literary finish is up to Henry James'.

I think I have already mentioned to you, or at any rate printed,

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Dazzi's[5] surprise at the modernity of Cavalcanti. "What, paroles en liberté!"

I come back to my first opinion re the way to get the job done, namely that you shd. run on, in your own way, to the end and then go back and look more carefully at the meaning of each let us say phrase (not word) of the original.

I simply don't believe that any man could do the masterwork that a definitive English *Odyssey* should be at the speed you are going.

Who makes the living line must SWEAT, be gheez!

I appear to be the last living Rhadmanthus, Turco the Terrible and the only fool left on earth who calls down the mighty from their seats (and then watches 'em clinging to the tacks in the upholstery).

Process usually conducted in taciturn aloofness . . . indicated in cessation of correspondence.

Then I hear N. Angell is weeping in public that I birched him. (Evidence not yet to hand.)

6.

Rapallo *23 May 1935*

Dear Dr. R.: Yes, keep on sending it and don't worry about my *time*. What else have I? And what is money good for but to save TIME?

I can't translate the *Odyssey* myself.

A. Am on a job (or perhaps two or three) that needs all the brains I've got.
B. Too god damn iggurunt of *Greek*.
C. When I do sink into the Greek, what I dig up is too concentrative; I don't see how to get unity of the *whole*.

I suspect neither Dante nor Homer had the kind of boring "unity" of surface that we take to be characteristic of Pope, Racine, Corneille.

[5]Manlio Dazzi, director of the Biblioteca Malatestiana at Cesena, helped Pound with some of the fatigue duties in Cavalcanti research. Subsequently, Pound dedicated to him his *Guido Cavalcanti Rime*.

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The Nekuia shouts aloud that it is *older* than the rest, all that island, Cretan, etc., hinter-time, that is *not* Praxiteles, not Athens of Pericles, but Odysseus.

I keep nagging you because a trans. of the *Odyssey* seems to me so enormous an undertaking, and the requirements include *all* the possible masteries of English.

A best-selling novelist said apropos my *Propertius* that he (the novelist) couldn't do anything like that, "I got no *depth*." When one starts to praise the *Odyssey*, very hard not to get rhetorical. The deep is so deep, like clear fathoms down.

Para thina poluphloisboio thalasses: the turn of the wave and the scutter of receding pebbles.

Years' work to get that. Best I have been able to do is cross cut in *Mauberley*, led up to:

. . . imaginary
Audition of the phantasmal sea-surge

which is totally different, and a different movement of the water, and inferior.

Hell! There is work *work* WORK all over the job.

The *first* essential is the narrative movement, forward, not blocking the road as Chapman does. Everything that stops the reader must *go*, be cut out. And then everything that holds the mind, long after the reading, i.e., as much as is humanly possible, must be clamped back on the moving prose. It is enough to break six men's backs, and if you hadn't *been there* in a sailing boat, I shd. lie down and surrender. . . . * * * *

7.

Rapallo *6 June 1935*

Dear Dr. Rouse: * * * * I thought I *had* given plenary approval to Nanny and all yr. country idiom, any real speech.

Card just recd. Possibly you are Greek enough to take complete cynicism as part of divine equipment and that I am so Xtian that a lying god tickles my funny bone.

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You a goddess ask of me who am a god,
Nevertheless I will tell you the truth.

Goddess wd. know anyhow, so no use the habitual mendacity, put as many folds on it as you like.

Pickthall,[6] who knows his Near East, said veracity is only valued where people are in a hurry and set value on quickness.

13 June

The chief impression in reading Homer is freshness. Whether illusion or not, this is the classic quality. 3000 years old and still *fresh.* A trans. that misses that is bad. Must get *new* combinations of words. I can't recall "patient protagonist" as occurring in English. I use this as example. A trans. of meaning. I repeat Dazzi's scandal re Cavalcanti using "paroles en liberté" and also wonder about Æschylus and syntax, whether editors haven't tried to put back too much.

Dear W.H.D.R.: Press of work and *disgust* with the abysmal filth of the world as piled up in evidence on my desk by the *Daily Post* has kept me off this job and I go on a trip next week.

A very sensitive American writer (undergrad) here present has gone thru yr. ms. He is getting ready to write good novels. Last night he objected at first glance that yr. ms. was full of classroom phrases, and *hopeless,* and why did I think, etc., etc.

[6] M. Pickthall, author of *Oriental Encounters, The House of Islam* and other works.

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The Rose in the Steel Dust

HUGH KENNER

I

> Kung said: Hui's mode of action was to seize the unwavering axis, coming to an exact equity; he gripped it in his fist, and at once started using it, careful as if he was watching his chicken-coop, and he never let go or lost sight of it.

POUND THE TECHNICIAN stripping the fat from an image and the slither from a rhythm is coterminous with Pound the Confucian intent on defining a moral principle so sharply that it can be seized in the fist and used. This concern for exact definition ("Orthography is a discipline of morale and of morals") is the whole key to Pound, his *Cantos*, his music, his economics, and everything else. The "Ching Ming" ideograph 正名 of precise verbal definition makes its first appearance in the *Cantos* at the end of Canto LI and recurs throughout the following nineteen cantos, whose orientation is explicitly political (e.g. *Cantos LII to LXXI*, pp. 79, 98, 128, 133, 146). It registers a scale of exactitude extending from philology to government and ultimately to that extension of enlightenment which may be taken as convertible with "civilization" ("The men of old wanting to clarify and diffuse throughout the empire that light which comes from looking straight into the heart and then acting . . .") and which is both the major principle of unity in the *Cantos* and in Pound's career of usefulness to letters. To say that the unity of the *Cantos* is Pound is not as limiting a judgment as might at first appear.

The artist, as Flaubert made plain and as Pound never tires of reminding us, defines and renders with exactitude. Nor is there any incongruity between a meticulous adjustment of rhythms and the didactic pretensions of the vast net flung by the *Cantos*. (Flaubert claimed that if people had read his *Education Senti-*

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mentale the war of 1870 wouldn't have happened.) "Finding the precise words for the inarticulate heart's tone" relates conduct scrupulously to motives, motives to perceptions, formulations to observations, theory to practice, poetry to things seen and sensations undergone. The "Don'ts for Imagists" of 1913:

> Use no superfluous word, no adjective, which does not reveal something.
>
> Don't use such an expression as "dim lands *of peace.*" It dulls the image. It mixes an abstraction with a concrete. . . .
>
> Go in fear of abstractions. Do not re-tell in mediocre verse what has already been done in good prose. . . .

are expanded in the Confucian translation of 1945 into ethics and metaphysics, that is, into the "lyric" cantos, with their imagery of light, rain, and sculpturesque demarcation:

> On this meridian the man of breed respects, desires sincerity, holds it in honour and defines his terminology.
>
> . . . The inborn nature begets this activity naturally, this looking straight into oneself and thence acting. These two activities constitute the process which unites outer and inner, object and subject, and thence constitutes a harmony with the seasons of earth and heaven.
>
> Hence the highest grade of this clarifying activity has no limit, it neither stops nor stays.
>
> . . . With this penetration of the solid it has effects upon things, with this shining from on high, that is with its clarity of comprehension, now here, now yonder, it stands in the emptiness above with the sun, seeing and judging, interminable in space and in time, searching, enduring, and therewith it perfects even external things. . . .
>
> The celestial and earthly process pervades and is substantial; it is on high and gives light, it comprehends the light and is lucent, it extends without bound, and endures.
>
> (*Unwobbling Pivot*, III, xxv. 2—xxvi. 8)

"Harmony with the seasons of earth and heaven": compare—

Know then:
Toward summer when the sun is in Hyades
Sovran is Lord of the Fire
to this month are birds.
with bitter smell and with the odour of burning

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To the hearth god, lungs of the victim
The green frog lifts up his voice
and the white latex is in flower. . . .

and the rest of the canto (LII). In the next canto this sense of ordered process gathered up in ritual is affiliated with art as the embodiment of a cognized over-all harmony:

Chun to the spirit Chang Ti, of heaven
moving the sun and stars
que vos vers expriment vos intentions,
et que la musique conforme

(French has been since the eighteenth century the modern European language of comparable precision. The polyglot features of the *Cantos* are far from fortuitous.)

". . . It is on high and gives light, it comprehends the light and is lucent. . ." Compare, from Canto LXXIV,

Light tensile immaculata
the sun's cord unspotted
"sunt lumina" said the Oirishman to King Carolus,
"OMNIA,
all things that are are lights". . . .

"The Oirishman" is Scotus Erigena, the Catholic context of whose philosophy is fused with that of the Chinese sages elsewhere in the same canto:

and this day the air was made open
for Kuanon of all delights,
Linus, Cletus, Clement
whose prayers,
the great scarab is bowed at the altar
the green light gleams in his shell
plowed in the sacred field and unwound the silk worms
early
in tensile
in the light of light is the virtù
"sunt lumina" said Erigena Scotus 明

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as of Shun on Mt Taishan
and in the hall of the forebears
as from the beginning of wonders
the paraclete that was present in Yao, the precision
in Shun the compassionate
in Yu the guider of waters

(For Yao, Shun, and Yu see the opening of Canto LIII. Linus, Cletus, and Clement are corresponding saints of the very early Church who turn up in the prayers at the Mass. The scarab-shell is the priest's chasuble.)

Ching Ming—the purification of the word—leads us in this way into a zone of perception, reaching naturally to poetry, common to all high civilizations. Hence "the serious artist," whom Pound describes in an early essay as the maintainer of the mental health of the state, has concerns identical with those of the serious philosopher, the serious ruler, the serious editor or publisher, the serious teacher. He keeps up values. As long ago as 1910, long before doctrinaire emphasis could be suspected of warping his eye for fact, Pound had noted, as a perfectly natural phenomenon, Dante's grouping of the usurers and the violent against art in the same quarter of Hell. The widely-anthologized Canto XLV adduces multiple analogies for the same perception:

with usura
seeth no man Gonzago his heirs and his concubines
no picture is made to endure nor to live with
but it is made to sell and sell quickly
with usura, sin against nature,
is thy bread ever more of stale rags
is thy bread dry as paper,
with no mountain wheat, no strong flour
with usura the line grows thick
with usura is no clear demarcation. . . .

These are not merely arguable economic statements. They furnish, in their collectivity, an ideogram of a state of mind and its contrary. Unless the distinction between "clear demarcation"

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and its opposite can become vivid to the reader, and unless he can overcome the notion that the former is the property of mathematical science whereas poetry is a matter of imprecisions and shifting roseate veils, there is no hope of his penetrating the *Cantos* or even of reading Shakespeare. It was a poet who remarked of metaphysics, "Unless a term is left meaning one particular thing, and unless all attempt to unify different things, however small the difference, is clearly abandoned, all metaphysical thought degenerates into a soup." It was a poet who attributed the decline of the Renaissance to the growing habit of talking about things "in terms of something else," and in the same volume quoted Barzun's invective against "*poésie farcie de 'comme'.*"

Pound sees the racial or national consciousness, from its poetry down to its pig-selling, as a continuum. The distinction of the poet is simply that he deals in ideas that are more, not less, definite than those of the grocer. "Not the idea but the degree of its definition determines its aptitude for reaching to music." Music: not necessarily a lilt or unbroken vowels, but "music of ideas," a phrase frequently tossed into a gap in the speaker's knowledge during discussions of Eliot, but actually susceptible of definite exemplification—the tension, interplay, and mutual modification among juxtaposed units each of which is the verbal embodiment of a sharply-defined perception.[1]

Such verbal exactitudes, taken from the correspondence of John Adams, are set in motion in the un-canorous Cantos LXII-LXXI. It is the essence of Pound's praise of Adams, and intimately related to Adams' political efficiency, that his casual phrases are so closely derived from his sense of fact as to permit of this use. The poetic rationale of the *Pisan Cantos,* with the "items" largely phrased or rephrased by Pound and drawn from a very wide variety of sources, is identical in principle. No one

[1] "Dante lives in his mind; to him two blending thoughts give a music perceptible as two blending notes of a lute. He is in the real sense an idealist. He sings of true pleasures; he sings as exactly as Villon; they are admirably in agreement: Dante to the effect that there are supernormal pleasures, enjoyable by men through the mind; Villon to the effect that the lower pleasures lead to no satisfaction." (*Spirit of Romance,* p. 188).

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will deny the unforgettable lucidity of any fragment of that sequence. The difficulty, with which we shall soon be dealing, is only to see how they belong side by side.

II

If the *Cantos* seem to us a loose concatenation of brilliant fragments, it is partly because we tend to hasten impatiently over the parts where the rhythm does not stamp and sway. When we read,

> *. . . . . is that moral considerations seldom*
> *appear to have much weight in*
> *the minds of statesmen*
> *unless connected with popular feelings*

or

> *the army vocabulary contains almost* 48 *words*
> *one verb and participle one substantive* ὕλη
> *one adjective and one phrase sexless that is*
> *used as a sort of pronoun*
> *from a watchman's club to a vamp or fair lady*

we are apt to imagine ourselves confronted with bits of cut-up prose. These are in fact examples of unusual but highly sophisticated verse. The rhythm is not a means of beating time but of grouping words; the division into lines sometimes suggests the phrasing of colloquial speech—

> *the army vocabulary contains almost* 48 *words//*

sometimes avoids the normal speech-pause—

> *. . . one verb and participle//one substantive . . .*

and sometimes syncopates with it:

> *. . . and one phrase sexless that is//*
> *used as a sort of pronoun . . .*

These notational equivalents for lifted eyebrows detach the poet as civilized consciousness from his role as narrator and transcriber;

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they refine upon the similar functions performed by inverted commas in *Mauberley* and *Propertius*. Concurrently, they are devices for setting the image in motion.

The "motion" of the moving image is contained, ultimately, in the word-to-word jostle of language itself. The simplest sentence "moves." A charge of some kind is transferred from subject to predicate: Man s—e—e—s→ Horse. In inflected languages the predicate is actually spelled in an altered way to indicate the damage it sustains or the addition it incurs. This key insight of Fenollosa's is one of the neglected points of contact between his essay on the Chinese written character and general poetics. The ideogram is the reverse of static. In the same way, every lyric poem has a plot. The action of the simplest category of lyric, the two-line Japanese *hokku* with which Pound experimented extensively, depends on Aristotle's central plot-device, *peripeteia* or "reversal of the situation":

> *Fu I loved the high cloud and the hill,*
> *Alas, he died of alcohol.*

The *Pisan Cantos* are full of *hokku:*

> *And Margherita's voice was clear as the notes of a clavichord*
> *tending her rabbit-hutch . . .*

> *O moon my pin-up,*
> *chronometer . . .*

> *Arachne, che mi porta fortuna, go spin on that tent rope . . .*

In longer passages the principle of action is identical:

> *Came Eurus as comforter*
> *And at sunset la pastorella dei suini*
> *driving the pigs home, benecomata dea*
> *under the two-winged cloud*
> *as of less and more than a day*

The point to be noted here is that the next word is always

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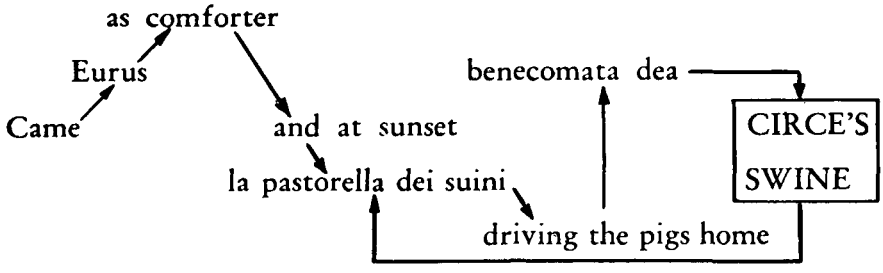
unexpected. With the addition of each new component the trajectory changes direction:



It will be seen, for what help the parallel may prove to be, how this corresponds to cinematic montage, the succession of timed, computed, and carefully composed shots. The Shakespearean running metaphor is like a double-exposure, again in the literal sense a case of the moving image:

> *Witness this army of such mass and charge,*
> *Led by a delicate and tender prince,*
> *Whose spirit, with divine ambition puffed,*
> *Makes mouths at the invisible event,*
> *Exposing what is mortal and unsure*
> *To all that fortune, death, and danger dare,*
> *Even for an eggshell.*

Over the successive unexpectedness of the words is imposed a ghostly sequence of firing cannon: "mass and charge"; "puffed"; "mouths at the invisible event" (cannon elevated to a target beyond the horizon; the shouting face of the officer; a nose thumbed at destiny; these in triple-exposure). The coming to rest of the whole upon "eggshell" is pure Imagism.

III

In the *ABC of Reading* Pound quotes a Japanese student on the difference between poetry and prose: "Poetry consists of gists and piths." Contemporary poetry owes its vitality as well as its superficial queerness to the rediscovery of this truth.

Probably the most difficult readjustment to be made in starting

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to take poetry seriously is the extirpation of the received idea that only prose writing really gets down to business, while the poet culls superficial flowers and hangs with daisy-chains the sculptured result of prosateurs' hard thinking.

The poet works not from the superficies inward but from the essential action outward. Pope's party-writers and falsifiers of history compete at polluting the Thames (*Dunciad* II, 275 ff.), a transposition into mimetic terms of their characteristic activity. Such an image is worth a volume of history, and carries a higher potential than any quantity of invective. Notes covering seven-eighths of the page in the latest scholarly edition tell us nothing to the point that isn't *in* the poem, that we won't readily find if we keep our eyes on what happens on the page, on the diving-contest and not on the identity of Oldmixon or Smedley:

> *In naked majesty Oldmixon stands,*
> *And Milo-like surveys his arms and hands;*
> *Then, sighing thus, "And am I now three-score?*
> *Ah why, ye Gods, should two and two make four?"*
> *He said, and climbed a stranded lighter's height,*
> *Shot to the black abyss, and plunged downright.*
> *The Senior's judgment all the crowd admire,*
> *Who but to sink the deeper, rose the higher.*

The eye doesn't willingly wander from this to a note on Oldmixon's censures of Addison, or his scandalous history of the Stuarts in folio; doesn't, that is, unless guided by hopeless misconceptions of how to read a poem. The verse sets Oldmixon characteristically in action in, it is true, a surprising material context. It is of little further interest to be told into what waters he generally dived. The action is everything; the material indifferent.

"Gists and piths" turn out to be actions. We know from Aristotle that "The ship ploughs the waves" doesn't call a ship a plough (which it would really require a commentator to unscramble) but compares an action to an action. A metaphor pegs out the limits of an action with four terms (Ship/waves::

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plough/ground) only two of which need be named. The same is true of ideogram. From seeing things set in relation we intuit, or at least learn to intuit, the dynamics of that relation.

"The poet imitates men in action," says Aristotle. Pope's eight lines imitate Oldmixon's action, in a more dramatic material (Thames mud) than that in which Oldmixon generally dealt. A metaphor also imitates an action: Pope's lines may be taken as concretizing the metaphor, "The party-writer pollutes the public mind." The Chinese ideogram imitates an action: it is a picture of a metaphor. On p. 35 of his *Unwobbling Pivot* pamphlet Pound reproduces an ideogram showing, literally, "a man standing by his word." That this lies in the province of "gists and piths" may be seen by contrasting the vaguer ambience of an abstract noun like "fidelity" or "honesty." The ideogram is not a quaint makeshift. It is more specific, not less. It defines by imitation a particular mode of honesty, adherence to the word previously given. The poetic is in the same way an exacter speech than the prosaic, whether the material be passion or economics. Audible song is not of the essence of poetry. The poem sings—the *Cantos* sing—when precision requires a melodic mode of definition.

Ideogram and metaphor, then, are sharply focused as to action, relatively indifferent as to material. The essential action of "maintaining one's defined intention" is the same whether the "given word" relate to marriage vows, rates of taxation, or acceptance of responsibility for a bundle of laundry. Hence the suitability of the ideogrammic method for the use to which it is put in the *Cantos,* that of establishing a "hierarchy of values" by isolating either volitional dynamics or persistent emotional currents from hundreds of different material contexts.

The ideogrammic method consists in using concatenations of metaphor to isolate, define, and compare qualities of action and passion. It belongs to a scientific climate that no longer considers it safe to disregard exceptions, intransigent observations, in the interests of formulable normalcy. ("The method of science," wrote Fenollosa, "which is the method of poetry . . .") The

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Cantos, analogously, inhabit a world, first entered by the French symbolists, in which it is no longer necessary to twist incidents and persons into a schema or plot. (We are in fact growing used to a novel in which the plot is not a simple line of action, but the process of rendering the data intelligible. This is as true of *The Great Gatsby* and *What Makes Sammy Run?* as of *The Good Soldier, Heart of Darkness, Ulysses, A Passage to India.* The detective story simply reflects the characteristic devices of these novels in a schematic and rationalistic way.)

It may be noted in passing that the term "ideogram" has one connotative advantage over the term "metaphor." The latter, which for Aristotle meant an intuitive perception of likeness among dissimilars, has been warped toward implying a step into abstraction: a new and exotic "vehicle" chosen to dress up a humdrum "tenor." Such transfer of terms may or may not take place. Pope, in the passage we have quoted, defined Oldmixon's action in a more vivid context, though not to dress it up but to isolate its essentials. But there is no intrinsic reason why the terms provided by fact may not be vivid enough; Pound in Canto XXIX defines Cunizza da Romano's magnanimity in the terms (freeing her slaves) actually provided by his documents. Hence in many parts of the *Cantos* the transfer of energy doesn't take place so much at the time the matter in hand is rendered (as Pope transfers the activity of Oldmixon from writing hired pamphlets to muddying London's stream) as in its juxtaposition with other rendered actions in the poem. Thus an entire canto may consist of fragmentary actions set side by side and related: A/B::C/D::E/F::G/H::I/J::K/L, the archetypal action emerging more and more clearly, and the poem consisting, as Mr. Eliot says of Dante's *Commedia,* of an extended metaphor with no room for metaphoric expressions in the details. It is convenient to use the term "ideogram" to describe this means of definition by way of juxtaposed but unaltered facts; and it is convenient to recall that ideogram and metaphor function identically to remind ourselves that there is nothing "unpoetic" about Pound's reliance on anecdotes and history books. The essential distinction

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between *The Cantos* and *Culture* lies in the infinite increase of emotional range and intellectual precision available through rhythmic as well as epithetic definition and through long pondering on the exact disposition of the recurrent components.

Facts, fables, and anecdotes have their intrinsic emotional impact, definable through rhythmic and melopoeic means; but structurally what counts is the invisible chain of common or contrasting actions and passions; the curve to which they are tangent. Only so much of the material context is given as touches that curve. Hence the bewilderment with which these fragmentary allusions strike us when we fail to bring to the verse that energy of perception that discerns the analogies and contrasts running down the page. When we are alert for the connections commentary is superfluous.

Pound has told of waiting over a year to find the exact image to evoke his emotion on emerging into a crowd from a Paris subway. The drive toward concision that during that year cut the appropriate poem from some fifty lines down to two has its lesson for this inquiry. The size and position of the invisible sphere can be given by a very few tangents. The invisible fields of force surrounding the magnet can be apprehended through the behavior of multitudinous particles of iron. The usual inquiry into the sources of poetic images throws about as much light on the verse as analysis of the graphite in penciled tangents does on the undrawn circle. When we have seen that the tangents are not stray lines, that the filings were not disposed by random scatter, we are in a position to intuit the controlling mystery. There is no incoherence about the following (LXXX):

At Ephesus she had compassion on silversmiths
revealing the paraclete
standing in the cusp
of the moon et in Monte Gioiosa
as the larks rise at Allegre
Cythera egoista
But for Actaeon
of the eternal moods has fallen away

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in Fano Caesaris for the long room over the arches
olim de Malatestis

wan *caritas* ΧΑΡΙΤΕΣ

and when bad government prevailed, like an arrow,
fog rose from the marshland
bringing claustrophobia of the mist
beyond the stockade there is chaos and nothingness . . .

The unique emotional tonality of these rhythms and images, artificially excerpted from a much more elaborate context, will scarcely be missed. Such feelings as are aroused in him on slow perusal the reader should encourage toward a degree of definition that will assist in elucidating the verse, the sense of which, while all but unformulable in conceptual terms (hence the tangential images) will be found to be perfectly definite: apprehensible, not explicable.

We have here a new inflection of the *femme fatale* theme that runs through the entire poem. Certain transient benisons—the favors of Diana of the Ephesians to the craftsmen who worked in her metal, the revelation of the moon-goddess' paraclete, the vision attended by the rising of larks—receive from the phrase "Cythera egoista" an intonation of favors coldly granted and willfully withdrawn; the disaster that befell Actaeon's passion for Diana (Canto IV), the expropriation of the glories of the Malatesta (Canto XI[2]), these carefully selected calamities transpose the fickleness of Cythera into terms of, successively, the personal hopelessness of pursuing cruel Beauty and the generic frustration the effort to register an enduring concept encounters at the hands of official power. The last four lines bind these feelings together, connecting by means of the catalytic magic of a flying hostile arrow the prevalence of bad government with the marshland mist that conceals the moon. This complex of figures

[2]And the writs run in Fano,
For the long room over the arches
Sub annulo piscatoris, palatium seu curiam OLIM de Malatestis.
Gone, and Cesena, Zezena *d ' ' ' e b ' ' ' e colonne,*
And the big diamond pawned in Venice . . .

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should be closely examined. "Prevailed" carries a sense of omnipresent smothering force, which the trim speed of the arrow inflects with a somewhat contrary tonality of instantaneous disaster. The curious tensions of the entire passage are registered in the odd irrational logic of the passing arrow calling up the fog: then the cloak of the moon-nymph (mentioned on the previous page) is transformed, with the final blackout of her Gioconda strip-tease, into "claustrophobia of the mist," and the tenuous vision of Diana who had compassion on silversmiths is dissolved into "chaos and nothingness."

Pound's early epigram To Καλόν:

> *Even in my dreams you have denied yourself to me*
> *And sent me only your handmaids,*

may be regarded as a seed-pearl of these metamorphoses, which contain in their sober progression the plight of the artist, the struggle to lay hold on beauty, the struggle to maintain fleeting intuitions of loveliness, the struggle to maintain a civilization at stretch; and contain them not in a mood of thwarted volition but in a special quality of romantic and impersonal sadness. The manifestations of beauty are far in time and space (distant and ancient Ephesus), the journeying and hiding and at long intervals compassionate moon is out of reach and inexorable, the Actaeon myth is at the same time too clear-cut to evoke indiscriminate emotions and in its terms too remote from usual experience to involve our active sense of frustration (we do not participate in it as we do, for example, in a Beethoven symphony), the Malatesta debacle is contained in old and unconjurable documents, the spectator is powerless against the closing mist. It is this quality of emotional contemplation without emotional involvement that gives the passage its unique timbre.

Perhaps this kind of talking around the verse will help the reader explore it for himself. It should not be mistaken for a prose equivalent. There is no prose equivalent. There is always danger of demanding from poetry the wrong kind of coherence. This language of exploration, this music whose silences are filled

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with the elaborative spinning of invisible filaments, is infinitely closer to Donne's *Ecstasy* (though Donne availed himself of the connective apparatus of scholastic disputation) than to the evocation of mood by the description of the woods beyond Tintern Abbey, or to our being informed, with appropriate orchestration, concerning the names and pedigrees of Satan's captains or the length of his spear.

We must learn not to panic in the rarefied air above our quotidian emotional ceiling.

IV

There are, if the reader must be presented with a bunch of keys, three or four that will help him unlock most of the *Cantos*. One is a remark of Pound's that out of the three main classes of themes, permanent, recurrent, and haphazard or casual, a hierarchy of values should emerge. Another is the essay, "Mediaevalism," written for his edition of Cavalcanti and reprinted in *Make It New*, pp. 345-352. A third, applicable to the *Cantos* by a legitimate extension into poetic organization of analogical aesthetic principles, is the "Treatise on Harmony" in his 1924 study of George Antheil. A fourth is his 1947 pamphlet of Confucian translations, completed at about the same time as the *Pisan Cantos: The Unwobbling Pivot* and the *Great Digest*. The latter should be read less for direct elucidation of the Chinese motifs in the *Cantos* than for initiation into the world of ordered perceptions that contains, like a field of force, the materials of the hugely miscellaneous poem.

It is difficult to conduct this discussion without recourse to electromagnetic imagery. The behavior of particles of metal in a magnetic field is used by Pound several times as an image of the poetic act:

> "I made it out of a mouthful of air" wrote Bill Yeats in his heyday. The *forma*, the immortal *concetto*, the concept, the dynamic form which is like the rose-pattern driven into the dead iron-filings by the magnet, not by material contact with the magnet itself, but separate from the magnet. Cut off by a layer of glass, the dust and filings rise and spring into order. Thus the *forma*, the concept rises from death
>
> The bust outlasts the throne
> The coin Tiberius.

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The magnet should be compared with Mr. Eliot's analogy of the poet as catalyst, the sheet of glass with his separation between the man who suffers and the mind which creates.

Pound's next paragraph (*Culture,* p. 152), a gloss on the phrase "the concept rises from death," glosses also the "Make It New" injunction in the *Great Digest.* The example is Gerhart Münch's violin transcription of Clement Janequin's bird-song chorale (this is the music reproduced in Canto LXXV):

> Janequin's concept takes a third life in our time, for catgut or patent silver, its first was choral, its second on the wires of Francesco Milano's lute. And its ancestry I think goes back to Arnaut Daniel and to god knows what "hidden antiquity."

"One of the rights of masterwork is the right of rebirth and recurrence." Here we have the link between "Make It New," Pound's translating activities, and the sense of historical recurrence that informs the *Cantos:* not a bulldozed "All this has happened before," but a lively sense of forms asserting their immortality in successive material opportunities.

The poetic act, the electrification of mute experiential filings into a manifestation of form, is not distinct from the act of intellection itself, as Aristotle implies in referring to the "active intellect" as the "*nous poietikos*":

Serenely in the crystal jet
as the bright ball that the fountain tosses
(Verlaine) as diamond clearness
How soft the wind under Taishan
where the sea is remembered
out of hell, the pit
out of the dust and glare evil
Zephyrus / Apeliota
This liquid is certainly a
property of the mind
nec accidens est but an element
in the mind's make-up
est agens and functions dust to a fountain pan otherwise
Hast 'ou seen the rose in the steel dust
(or swansdown ever?)

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so light is the urging, so ordered the dark petals of iron
we who have passed over Lethe.

This passage from Canto LXXIV follows several pages of memories:

or a fellow throwing a knife in the market
past baskets and bushels of peaches
at $1 *the bushel*
and the cool of the 42*nd St. tunnel* (*periplum*)
white-wash and horse cars, the Lexington Avenue cable
refinement, pride of tradition, alabaster . . . .

which emerge in retrospect with diamond clearness, luminous with social and moral quiddities, to undergo the play of the active and caressing mind

Serenely in the crystal jet
as the bright ball that the fountain tosses.

The sea, generically,

is remembered
out of hell, the pit
out of the dust and glare evil

and clear memories are integral with mental functions ("est agens")[3]; otherwise the fountain is stilled and dust-filled, grimy with the accumulated detritus of a lifetime of contacts. But the functioning mind pulls the "dust and glare evil" itself into forms, as dead iron around the poles of the magnet groups itself into a rose. Dante, whose intellect brought to a focus unimaginable splendors, is our poet's explicit exemplar; the somber rose of the Detention Camp mocks the white blossom in the form of which the "sacred soldiery" displayed themselves to Dante (*Paradiso* XXXI) but is scarcely less an imaginative achievement. The

[3]The rising water, that is, IS the fountain, not something pushed by the fountain. Cf. Yeats' "How can we know the dancer from the dance?" In the same way, the Confucian "process," the realization of the inborn nature, IS act, not a railway track along which act travels. Hence "what you depart from is not the process." (*Unwobbling Pivot* I, i-2; cf. the opening of Canto LXXIV). For the Verlaine allusion, see his Clair de Lune in the *Fêtes Galantes* volume.

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"dark petals of iron": the minor-keyed poetry of the *Pisan Cantos*.

The ellipses of this passage have been thus clumsily expanded in the hope of directing attention on a central Poundian image: art as the process of compelling out of otherwise mute particulars, by their electric juxtaposition, traces, intelligible patterns, of an intense, clear, luminous intellective world. The "Mediaevalism" essay provides for this conception the clearest gloss one could wish:

> . . . harmony in the sentience, harmony *of* the sentient, where the thought has its demarcation, the substance its *virtu*, where stupid men have not reduced all "energy" to unbounded undistinguished abstraction.
>
> For the modern scientist energy has no borders, it is a shapeless "mass" of force; even his capacity to differentiate it to a degree never dreamed of by the ancients has not led him to think of its shape or even its loci. The rose that his magnet makes in the iron filings, does not lead him to think of the force in botanic terms, or wish to visualize that force as floral and extant (*ex stare*).
>
> A mediaeval "natural philosopher" would find this modern world full of enchantments, not only the light in the electric bulb, but the thought of the current hidden in air and in wire would give him a mind full of forms, "*Fuor di color*" or having their hyper-colours. The mediaeval philosopher would probably have been unable to think the electric world and *not* think of it as a world of forms. . . .

If this is not clear enough, there is more:

> We appear to have lost the radiant world where one thought cuts through another with clean edge, a world of moving energies "*mezzo oscuro rade*", "*risplende in sè perpetuale effecto*", magnetisms that take form, that are seen, or that border the visible, the matter of Dante's *paradiso*, the glass under water, the form that seems a form seen in a mirror, these realities perceptible to the sense, interacting, "*a lui si tiri*". . . .

We appear to have lost this world:

> *all that Sandro knew, and Jacopo*
> *and that Velásquez never suspected*
> *lost in the brown meat of Rembrandt*
> *and the raw meat of Rubens and Jordaens*:

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a cross-light on which is Walter Pater's account of Sandro Botticelli's coloring, "no mere delightful quality of natural things, but a spirit upon them by which they become expressive to the spirit."

"Mediaevalism" (*circa* 1931) is simply the most elaborated expression of what has been a controlling interest of Pound's since *The Spirit of Romance* (1910). It makes contact with all his other interests: for example with the economic and moral themes of the *Cantos*. The Greek aesthetic, Pound notes, "would seem to consist wholly in plastic, or in plastic moving toward coitus, and limited by incest, which is the sole Greek taboo. . . . Plastic plus immediate satisfaction. The whole break of Provence with this world, and indeed the central theme of the troubadours, is the dogma that there is some proportion between the fine thing held in the mind, and the inferior thing ready for instant consumption."

This is more than a satisfying exegesis of the cult of idealized and unattainable mistresses. It has bearings of a more than "aesthetic," more than historical kind:

> *with usura . . .*
> *no picture is made to endure nor to live with*
> *but it is made to sell and sell quickly . . .*
> *with usura the line grows thick*
> *with usura is no clear demarcation . . .*

Instant consumption, absence of demarcation, usura. Against this,

> *Shines*
> *in the mind of heaven God*
> *who made it*
> *more than the sun*
> *in our eye.*

One cannot insist too often on the unified direction of Pound's interests. It is the slow establishment of these linkages in seventy cantos that underlies the extremely rapid shifts in the Pisan series. In the later cantos the same lines of force control an

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infinitely vaster congeries of material in a given brief space. There persists the large dichotomy between what lumps and muddles and abstracts, and what purifies, dissociates, renders in terms of concrete manifestation. "To have gathered from the air a live tradition" consists largely in his having recovered the latter from its several centuries of burial beneath the former.

An immediate consequence of this dichotomy between mud and light is the presence, throughout the *Cantos*, of contrasted sets of imagery. To list the themes and images by content or source is merely bewildering, as a number of commentators have discovered. If instead attention be paid to dramatic *function*, much, if not yet all, becomes luminous. In Canto XXIX, for instance, we have several juxtapositions of this kind:

(1) *Past the house of the three retired clergymen*
Who were too cultured to keep their jobs.
Languor has cried unto languor
about the marshmallow roast
(Let us speak of the osmosis of persons)
The wail of the phonograph has penetrated their marrow
(Let us . . .
The wail of the pornograph. . . .)
The cicadas continue uninterrupted.

(2) *The tower, ivory, the clear sky*
Ivory rigid in sunlight
And the pale clear of the heaven
Phoibos of narrow thighs,
The cut cool of the air,
Blossom cut on the wind, by Helios
Lord of the Light's edge, and April
Blown round the feet of the God. . . .

Languor, marshmallows, osmosis, culture Bostonian and gliding towards impotence; rigid ivory, the "cut cool," cut blossom, the light's edge, an April so embodied as to be blowable. In particular, the cut or cuttable or as-if-cut controls a whole sequence of sculpturesque imagery:

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Shelf of the lotophagoi,
Aerial, cut in the aether.

This family includes definition of every kind (Imagism: "Ching Ming"), translucence, stone, clear water, many things—stone, water, air, light—laid "ply over ply," shining metals, type-founders, artists and warriors aware of their work, writers of vivid and circumstantial accounts, in the later cantos the authors of exact and aphoristic observations:

so that you cd/ crack a flea on eider wan
ov her breasts
sd/ the old Dublin pilot
or the precise definition

The lyric passages in the first thirty cantos, with their quality of intoxicated vision, their sculptured scenery, their specified colors and defined edges, generally serve the same thematic function. The later lyrics pin down more diverse states.

Against this very large classification (to which should be added definition by strong rhythmic means) is the huge category of ignobility, muddle, and drift. In Cantos I and II the seaman who journeyed to hell undamaged faces the seamen of treasonous wills who sought to betray the god and were metamorphosed into fish. Cantos XXVII and XXVIII consist largely of metamorphoses in this mode, corpses rotting, men descended from frogs. The variety within this general category is, again, very great; and subdivisions become, again, sharper in the later cantos. Sometimes the mode is frankly caricature, after the techniques developed in *Lustra*:

And the mind of Lourpee at fifty
Directed him into a room with a certain vagueness
As if he wd.
neither come in nor stay out
As if he wd.
go neither to the left nor the right
And his painting reflected this habit. (XXVIII)

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In other places the endless incongruities of modern business are manipulated to display the salesman's or financier's low cunning against the Tuscan cult of the intelligence:

Baldy Bacon
bought all the little copper pennies in Cuba:
Un centavo, dos centavos,
told his peons to "bring 'em in."
"Bring 'em to the main shack," said Baldy,
And the peons brought 'em. . . .
Baldy's interest
Was in money business.
"No interest in any other kind uv bisnis,"
Said Baldy.

This canto (XII) is followed immediately by the ordered chant of the sage:

And Kung said, and wrote on the bo leaves:
If a man have not order within him
He can not spread order about him;
And if a man have not order within him
His family will not act with due order;
and if the prince have not order within him
He can not put order in his dominions.

Examples of further dissociation could be multiplied endlessly, since the main matter of the *Cantos* is to establish a hierarchy of values by dissociating actions, motives, periods, customs, sensibilities, in this way. Order and disorder take, and have taken, innumerable forms whose quiddities are to be savored. If the poet's task were simply to register a luminosity and a muddle, there would be no reason why it should have been protracted to even one-hundredth of its present length (over 500 pages so far). The job could be done in a twelve-line lyric. We should beware of stamping all the items in the *Cantos* either O.K. or N.G. But the cut-vs.-muddled remains one of the major skeletal lines to be grasped; it does no harm to insist on it.

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V

Cunningly controlled by intelligible forms, the extraordinary evocativeness in Pound's hands of a few juxtaposed images justifies to the hilt Mr. Eliot's celebrated dictum about poetry communicating before it is understood. It is the essence of the ideogrammic method that juxtaposed things confer intelligibility upon one another. Before we are equipped for specific recognition of a single allusion, we can sense the quality of the white and radiant world that emerges from such groupings as the following:

Cloud over mountain, mountain over the cloud
I surrender neither the empire nor the temples
plural
nor the constitution nor yet the city of Dioce
each one in his god's name
as by Terracina rose from the sea Zephyr behind her
and from her manner of walking
as had Anchises
till the shrine be again white with marble
till the stone eyes look again seaward
The wind is part of the process
The rain is part of the process
and the Pleiades set in her mirror
Kuanon, this stone bringeth sleep;
offered the wine bowl
grass nowhere out of place . . .

If, to cite Mr. Eliot again, it is the supreme difficulty of criticism to make the facts generalize themselves, it is nevertheless very nearly the whole business of poetry.

The ways in which in the *Cantos*, especially the later ones, the facts generalize themselves into steady patterns of athletic beauty deserve, it goes without saying, continuous particular study. Sheer architectonics, despite the superficially fragmentary look of the page, can scarcely have been carried much further in poetry. Exemplification is unwieldy: a few hints will have to serve. The Elpenor passage in Canto I:

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But first Elpenor came, our friend Elpenor,
Unburied, cast on the wide earth,
Limbs that we left in the house of Circe,
Unwept, unwrapped in sepulchre, since toils urged other.

. . . . . .

"But thou, O King, I bid remember me, unwept, unburied,
"Heap up mine arms, be tomb by sea-bord, and inscribed:
"A man of no fortune, and with a name to come.
"And set my oar up, that I swung mid fellows."

—implies certain potentials that are only released when, nineteen cantos later, after the myths of passion, the Malatesta episode, the merchants, Kung, inferno, war, muck-raking, and the vision of the Lotus-eaters, we hear from the chorus of

. . . the clear bones, far down,
Thousand on thousand.
"What gain with Odysseus,
"They that died in the whirlpool
"And after many vain labours,
"Living by stolen meat, chained to the rowingbench,
"That he should have a great fame
"And lie by night with the goddess?
"Their names are not written in bronze
"Nor their rowing sticks set with Elpenor's;
"Nor have they mound by sea-bord.
"That saw never the olives under Spartha
"With the leaves green and then not green,
"The click of light in their branches;
"That saw not the bronze hall nor the ingle
"Nor lay there with the queen's waiting maids,
"Nor had they Circe to couch-mate, Circe Titania,
"Nor had they meats of Kalüpso
"Or her silk skirts brushing their thighs.
"Give! What were they given?
Ear-wax.
"Poison and ear-wax,

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and a salt grave by the bull-field,
"neson amumona, *their heads like sea crows in the foam,*
"*Black splotches, sea-weed under lightning;*
"*Canned beef of Apollo, ten cans for a boat load.*"
(Canto XX)

One dimension of this passage may be established by contrasting its surging unanimity with the later muted lament from the stone pits:

"*Sero, sero . . .*
"*Nothing we made, we set nothing in order,*
"*Neither house nor the carving,*
"*And what we thought had been thought for too long;*
"*Our opinion not opinion in evil*
"*But opinion borne for too long.*
"*We have gathered a sieve full of water.*"
(Canto XXV)

These dragging reiterated negatives, the double "nothing," the hopeless "thought" that has already and for too long been thought, the threefold nullity of "opinion," are immediately set off by

notes and the chorus
Moving, the young fauns: Pone metum,
Metum, nec deus laedit;

but the major contrast is with the chorus of the drowned mariners five cantos earlier: "heavy voices, heavy sound" counterpointing the gathering energy of protest of the drowned taking up their chant by thousands. Clearly, there are degrees of failure.

The precision of definition achieved for these and each of the hundreds of other modes of being defined in the *Cantos* should not blind us to their mutual irradiation. It is too easy to be aware only of a series of disjunct medallions hung on a wall. But in this timeless bas-relief a complex intellectual drama is enacted. Denial of Pound's dramatic sense proceeds from the unaccustomed absence of a kind of stimulus he is careful not to give; the sort of

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progression d'effet that relegates the greater proportion of the words to supporting or ancillary status, preparations for climaxes, to be submerged in the ultimate epiphany. To keep the reader in breathless anticipation (the secret of professional narrative) is to keep him from paying comprehensive attention to what is going on *now*. In the *Cantos*, on the other hand, where everything may be said to be as important as everything else, no action, single or multiple, is being offered the reader for dramatic participation. This is not to say that the experience of reading the poem is not continuously exciting. But there is no sweep up to and away from a climactic moment or symbol. Preliminary motifs are not discarded; the reader must remember all things and contemplate all things in a simultaneous present. What would seem to be inhuman demands so made are largely abrogated by the internal reverberations of similar themes, cunningly disposed throughout the poem.

We have pointed out three of these mutually reverberating passages. Their interrelations are controlled by such devices as the slowly gathering rhythm of the sailor-chorus:

And beneath: the clear bones, far down
Thousand on thousand.
"What gain with Odysseus,
"They that died in the whirlpool
"And after many vain labours,
"Living by stolen meat, chained to the rowingbench,
"That he should have a great fame
"And lie by night with the goddess?

Out of the sea the chant gathers momentum; its rhythmic definition is only fully achieved in the last two lines just quoted. And it is against this gathering impetus of stamp and sway that the "heavy voices" of the stone pits and the hurried unorchestrated colloquy with the single shade of Elpenor are to be weighed, one lost man whose personal doom ("I fell against the buttress") admits particular personal contact and recompense ("Heap up mine arms"); thousands on thousands of nameless

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dead achieving, in counterpoint with the hero's delights, a community of impersonal lamenting emphasis; and the drone of blighted voices without being, betrayed not by personal accident or heroic necessity but by an inner saplessness of the will.

The ramifications of a given passage may be pursued indefinitely. The chorus of drowned seamen protests, in its immediate context, against the passionate drift of the Lotophagoi, and the Odysseus of whom they are jealous overlaps the world of receptive aesthetic passion ("Circe to couch-mate") and the factive vigors of the Malatesta; "The poor devils dying of cold, outside Sorano" counter-weight the Renaissance exploits as the mariners do the Homeric ones. The seamen's chorus, in fact, makes contact with everything in the preceding cantos: with the shored fragments of antiquarian passion in the first seven cantos, which in turn have affinities with the lives of the Lotophagoi; with the Malatesta; with latter-day warfare—

> *That's the trick with a crowd,*
> *Get 'em into the street and get 'em moving*
> (Canto XVI)

—with, negatively, commercial and infernal squalor. The Confucian canto (XIII) presents an intuition of order devoid of such unnecessary deaths, held in tension with an acknowledgment of the autonomy of personal volition and personal doom:

> *And Kung said, "They have all answered correctly,*
> *"That is to say, each in his nature."*

The cross-purposes and contretemps that in the actual world attend the incredibly wasteful realization of thought in matter are transposed by this latter dictum into a world of intellection and volition that can usefully encompass every direction of energy.

We have employed the analogy of reverberations running through the text as a means of controlling the steady accretion of material. It is possible to make this analogy more exact. Pound's theory of Great Bass in music throws much light on his poetic practices, and especially on the kind of organization the *Cantos*

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exhibit. Its rudiments were propounded as early as the preface to the Cavalcanti translations of 1910, a full statement is given in the little *Antheil* brochure of 1924 (some sixteen cantos being then written); *Culture* (1938) contains several more comprehensive restatements. In the *Cavalcanti* preface we read:

> When we know more of overtones we shall see that the tempo of every masterpiece is absolute, and is exactly set by some further law of rhythmic accord. Whence it should be possible to show that any given rhythm implies about it a complete musical form, fugue, sonata, I cannot say what form, but a form, perfect, complete. *Ergo,* the rhythm set in a line of poetry connotes its symphony, which, had we a little more skill, we could score for orchestra.

In the "Treatise on Harmony" that prefaces the Antheil volume, an intervening investigation of overtones has led to this firmer statement:

> A SOUND OF ANY PITCH, OR ANY COMBINATION OF SUCH SOUNDS, MAY BE FOLLOWED BY A SOUND OF ANY OTHER PITCH, OR ANY COMBINATION OF SUCH SOUNDS, providing the time interval between them is properly gauged; and this is true for ANY SERIES OF SOUNDS, CHORDS OR ARPEGGIOS.
>
> The limits for the practical purposes of music depend solely on our capacity to produce a sound that will last long enough, i.e. remain audible long enough, for the succeeding sound or sounds to catch up, traverse, intersect it.

In a poem the images persist for traversal and intersection in the reader's apprehension, in modalities governed by adroit rhythmic recall or imagistic analogy. For the poet and/or the reader of poetry, these statements mean that the secret of major form consists in the precise adjustment of the intervals between disparate or recurrent themes or items or rhythms. And anything at all may be put into a poem, provided its mode and degree of definition, and its relations with the other things in the poem, be suitably managed.

> Bach, consciously or unconsciously, never thought of using two chords except as parts, integral parts, of a progression, a rhythmic progression.

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Pound, quite consciously, never thinks of using two motifs, two blocks of rendering, except as parts, integral parts, of a larger rhythm of juxtaposition and recurrence. This balancing and recurrence of motifs is what holds together single cantos. It also holds together the entire work, the temporarily unfinished condition of which doesn't diminish the structural solidity of the portions existing, any more than the absence of a roof diminishes the interrelation of proportions among cathedral arches. Metaphor conceived in Aristotle's way as a proportion among proportions becomes in the *Cantos* the principle of major form.

"Any given rhythm implies about it a complete musical form." The apparition of Elpenor in Canto I implies certain concomitants, the time for which is not "right away." To generalize the case of Elpenor *immediately* in terms of the other lost seamen of that voyage, in terms of the human wreckage of all enterprises, would not only crowd the poem too much, it would suggest far too simple relationships, for example, an insoluble dilemma for the Odyssean figures of the world, a Hamlet's impasse bulking the cost of action too large to justify any action. For the proper tragic stasis and inhibition of irrelevant responses, these implications must be postponed for a definite interval, other material must be interposed, we must contemplate other dimensions of the factive personality (Malatesta, the Cid), other sacrifices (Cabestan's heart and the lady's suicide), other debacles (world war), leaders who betray as distinguished from leaders who involve their train in necessary attrition (Cantos XIV-XV), other modalities of order (Zagreus, Nerea, Kung). It demands, precisely, the interposition of nineteen cantos containing just these and no other materials, just so disposed. We hear at last from the chorus of mariners in Canto XX. We wait till Canto XXV, through a descending rhythm of increasing resistance and dispersal of energies, for the second major echo, the chorus from the stone pits.

This account of large-scale rhythm, a ground-bass not imposed upon but demanded by the particular disjunct materials into which the total aesthetic idea of the *Cantos* has been, so to

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speak, prismatically fragmented, for purposes of poetic presentation, has been illustrated from three occurrences of a single theme established on the second page. A similar account would of course apply to any sequence of motifs one might select. It applies within single cantos, very obviously in the looping recurrences of the Pisan sequence. In Canto LXXVI the modes of consciousness of the opening lines,

And the sun high over horizon hidden in cloud bank
lit saffron the cloud ridge
dove sta memora

interrupted by,

"Will" said the Signora Agresti, "break his political
but not economic system"

recur immediately, indomitable—

But on the high cliff Alcmene,
Dryas, Hamadryas ac Heliades
flowered branch and sleeve moving
Dirce et Ixotta e che fu chiamata Primavera
in the timeless air,

and persist through modulations, negations, witty juxtapositions—

in the timeless air over the sea-cliffs
"the pride of all our D.T.C. was pistol-packin' Burnes"

to occupy the center of the canto in a continuous minor key of loss and sorrow:

is measured by the to whom *it happens*
and to what, and if to a work of art
then to all who have seen and who will not . . .
. . . . . .
no cloud, but the crystal body
the tangent formed in the hand's cup

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as live wind in the beech grove
as strong air amid cypress
. . . . . .
nothing matters but the quality
of the affection—
in the end—that has carved the trace in the mind
dove sta memoria
. . . . . .

Such excision indicates the continuity of feeling, though it does violence to the cunning with which these recurrences are spaced. The entire canto should be examined most carefully. It will be noted, for example, that in the citations just given the phrase "dove sta memoria" occurs in two contexts. The reader presumably knows its source in the Cavalcanti "Donna mi pregha" canzone, translated by Pound in Canto XXXVI:

Where memory liveth,
it [love] *takes its state*
Formed like a diafan from light on shade.

"Dove sta memoria"—"where memory liveth"—connected by Cavalcanti via Neoplatonic psychology with medieval light-metaphysics (the sun as source of physical light being analogous with the focus of intellectual *virtu*), is connected by Pound first with the suffusion of clouds by hidden light—

And the sun high over horizon hidden in cloud bank
lit saffron the cloud ridge
dove sta memora

(memory hypostasized as part of an extra-mental world of forms; memories illuminating present clouds and cankers); then six pages later with the quality of the possessed and personal mental world—

nothing matters but the quality
of the affection—
in the end—that has carved the trace in the mind
dove sta memoria

(memories as ingredients of the mental make-up, lovely or otherwise, and determined according to the individual's bestowal of

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affection; Cavalcanti's canzone is of *Amor,* and the entire motif is caught up five cantos later: "What thou lov'st well shall not be reft from thee"). Between these occurrences of the "dove sta memoria" motif, and determining both the progression from the physical metaphor to the ethical statement and the weight of emotion carried ultimately by the latter, come literally dozens of other themes, all delimiting "the quality of the affection." These groupings are not fortuitous. They are the very texture of the *Cantos.* Everything is weighted by its context, and everything functions as part of the context of everything else. This order is not excogitated. It is the function of a tact, a scrupulous fidelity to the contours of his experience, which in turn registers the intensity with which—over how many years!—Pound has contemplated his world of forms: "As the sculptor sees the form in the air/before he sets hand to mallet,/and as he sees the in, and the through,/the four sides."

VI

Yeats has reported one plan of organization for the *Cantos* in *A Packet for Ezra Pound;* Pound's own remark about permanent, recurrent, and haphazard themes implies another; inklings of an Inferno-Purgatorio-Paradiso analogue have more recently emerged. It is futile to argue about the "right" plan or to infer that Pound has repeatedly changed his mind. Ten thousand different-looking cross-sections, all equally "correct," can be taken of any complex organism. A slight change in the angle of cut will reveal a wholly new surface. A plan exists in two dimensions, a poem in an unbounded number. We have already mentioned the interplay of two contrasting streams of imagery:

Cut	Lumpy
Clear	Opaque
Defined	Soggy
Sculptured	Confused
Stone	Mud
Water	Murk
Light	Gloom
Volition	Drift & Slither

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These might be parceled out among various cantos to yield a convincing structural prospectus. A different level of organization would be revealed by dissociating:

1-51	Timeless frieze.
52-71	Action unfolding in time.
74-84	Remembered co-presence.

Again, taking as a key Pound's dictum that the history of culture is the history of ideas going into action, one would get:

1	Overture: poetic action.
2-16	Supply of ideas.
17-30	Greek ideas in action: Renaissance and Contemporary.
31-41	Jeffersonian ideas in action: America & Italy.
42-51	Stasis: Folk-wisdom & Summary.
52	Cosmic order.
53-61	Ideas in action: China.
62-71	Ideas in action: Adams.
74-84	Stasis: Contemporary crisis in guise of personal lyric.

Again, one might, on a hint in Canto LII, trace Kung and Eleusis as interwoven threads:

Kung	Eleusis
Ruler	People
Doctrine	Mysteries
Volitional	Traditional
Directed Will	Choric Ritual
Politics	Religion
Human Works	Natural Fertility
Action	Passion

etc.

The following notes are intended to highlight as many relations as possible at a single view. They omit a great deal, but at least indicate one way in which the poem hangs together. The reader will understand that he is offered not a set of answers to a puzzle, but an exegetical tool whose usefulness, like that of any other tool, will depend on the hands into which it falls.

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CANTO I

Overture on several levels. Distinguish:

(1) Cultural overlayering. "In any case the classic culture of the Renaissance was grafted onto mediaeval culture, a process which is excellently illustrated by Andreas Divus Justinopolitanus' translation of the Odyssey into Latin." The relevant portion of Divus' text may be examined in ***Make It New,*** pp. 138-141. In the canto, the medieval is represented by Anglo-Saxon (*Seafarer*) rhythms. The fusion points forward to the classical-Renaissance counterpoint in Cantos XVII-XXX.

(2) Persona. The poet as Odysseus. "He saw the cities of many peoples and he learnt their ways. He suffered many hardships on the high seas in his struggles to preserve his life and bring his comrades home. But he failed to save those comrades, in spite of all his efforts. It was their own sin that brought them to their doom, for in their folly they devoured the oxen of Hyperion the Sun, and the god saw to it that they should never return."[4] In one sense, the substance of the *Cantos* is what Odysseus sees, as that of *The Waste Land* is what Tiresias sees. The distinction between these two personae gives us one measure of Pound's poem. Tiresias the shade, foresuffering all, is capable only of psychic action, motions of fascination, revulsion, purgation. Odysseus, *polumetis,* many-minded, fertile in stratagems, is engaged in active amelioration of conditions for himself and his men, involved as factive protagonist in what he sees. Eliot and Pound are conducting their scrutiny at different levels which do not contradict one another.

(3) Descent to Tiresias. Visit with the dead as indispensable prologue to homecoming. Invocation of chthonic wisdom, encyclopedic intelligence. Rhythms, rituals, to coerce intelligibility out of events. Elpenor episode: piety to forerunners and gone companions.

CANTOS II-XVI

A thematic concordance (compare the pages of "terminology" prefixed to the translation of *The Great Digest*) of modes of moral being later to be inspected in action in a wide variety of contexts.

2-7. PASSION.

Myths, metamorphoses, modes of love and violence.

Helen theme: Danae, Troy in Auvergnat, Eleanor of Acquitaine, "Doom goes with her in walking"; summation in XLVI: "Aurum est commune sepulchrum . . . helandros kai heleptolis kai helarxe" (breaker of cities, of men, of order).

Cunizza theme: fidelity, Procne, Cabestan's lady, fructive passion: "Winter and summer I sing of her grace."

---

[4]Homer's exordium, trans. E. V. Rieu.

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One key to these cantos is at the opening of VIII: "These fragments you have shelved (shored)." Another in VII: "And the passion endures. Against their action, aromas. Rooms, against chronicles."

8-11. ACTION.

Sigismundo Malatesta. The factive personality imprinting itself on its time, its mark surviving all expropriation. "A codex once of the Lords Malatesta" furnishes the text for civilized activity at the end of XXX. Innumerable relics "Olim de Malatestis" haunt the later cantos.

And they want to know what we talked about?
"de litteris et de armis, praestantibusque ingeniis,
Both of ancient times and our own; books, arms,
And of men of unusual genius,
Both of ancient times and our own, in short the usual subjects
Of conversation between intelligent men." (XI)

12. CUNNING, placed as incestuous and abortive.

13. KUNG. Each aphorism gears with other motifs in the poem.

14-15. INFERNO. "The place lacking in interest, /last squalor, utter decrepitude."

16. PURGATORS: Blake, Dante, Augustine, "burglar-alarms."
ELYSIAN FIELDS: *earned* paradise (distinct from the passionate drift of the lotus-eaters in XX). "And by their fountains, the heroes,/ Sigismundo, and Malatesta Novello,/ and founders, gazing at the mounts of their cities."
WORLD WAR: A litmus-paper distinguishing modes of moral being.

CANTOS XVII-XXX

Much of the modern world may be seen as the ossified heritage of the Renaissance; the Renaissance being the period when Greek ideas, apprehended with various ideas of clearness, suddenly went into action. These cantos weave their lock-stitch through Renaissance Venice and the nineteen-twenties.

17. SECOND OVERTURE. Cultural overlaying. Elements of dawn and magnificence in Greece and Renaissance Italy.

18-19. COMMERCE AND WAR. Munitions trade, revolutionaries, traders in far countries.

20. LOTUS-EATERS. Contrast second part of XVI, and see section V of essay above.

21-23. TRIPTYCH: (1) Confusion, source of renewals.
(2) Confusion, dissipation, muddle.
(3) Bringers of order, artists in living, conquerors.

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Hymn to Aphrodite the ground-bass of scientists,[5] platonists, poets, voyagers, troubadours.

24-26. TRIPTYCH: (1) Venice: maturity.
(2) Venice: inner death—"dead words keeping form."
(3) Venice: decline. Luxuria. Will sinks into wrangle.

Not successive stages but simultaneous strands, as the frequent dates remind us.

27-28. METAMORPHOSES (slither, not persistence of vital form).

29. REPRISE. Helen theme (Pernella) } { Cunizza theme.
Muddle. } { Clear-cut.

30. "Nothing is now clean slayne
But rotteth away."
"Balls for yr. honour!" } { Final tableau: AFFIRMATION of a high and busy civilization.

Il Papa Mori.

CANTOS XXXI-XLI

We move in for a close-up on matter developed in Cantos VIII-XI, XIII, XXIII, and elsewhere: the statesman as artist. Politics, like writing poetry, is a practical art, using available materials with an eye to the best work feasible, mobilizing a plenum of practical knowledge to cope with circumstances continually new.

Simultaneously, we inspect a *new* set of concepts going into action. The complete change in the tone of the verse marks the supersession of the dark and lordly magnificence rooted in Greek irresponsibility by the brisk shrewd rationality of the Enlightenment.

The American Constitution was an innovation. The new sequence begins with Jefferson. With the first lines of Canto XXXI we are plunged into an utterly changed moral climate, which has shaken off the incubus of tradition constantly enacted in the heavy sway and chant of the Renaissance cantos. The opening panorama of Jefferson's encyclopedic interests displays him detached from the past, selecting and conserving, building his new nation amid a new mental freedom. A passage from the Pisan sequence enforces the Confucian axis of this alert detachment:

Yaou chose Shun to longevity
who seized the extremes and the opposites
holding the true course between them
shielding men from their errors

[5] "We have ceased to believe that we conquer anything by having Alexander the Great make a gigantic 'joy-ride' through India. We know that conquests are made in the laboratory, that Curie with his minute fragments of things seen clearly in test-tubes . . . makes conquests." (*Make It New*, p. 255).

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cleaving to the good they had found
holding empire as if not in a mortar with it
nor dazzled thereby

"As if not in a mortar with it."

External clues to the organization of these eleven cantos will be found in *Jefferson and/or Mussolini* (1935; written 1933). Definition of the exact claims there made is more important than wrangle about the justice of their application to Mussolini. A few paragraphs relevant to the *Cantos* follow:

(1) In one sense American history or the history of American development runs from Jefferson through Van Buren and then takes a holiday; or is broken by a vast parenthesis, getting rid of the black chattel slavery, and then plunging fairly into unconsciousness.

We were diddled out of the heritage Jackson and Van Buren left us. The real power just oozed away from the electorate. The *de facto* government became secret, nobody cared a damn about the *de jure* . . . (p. 97).

Hence the constructive period in American history runs from the Revolution to the Bank War (Cantos XXXI-XXXIV, XXXVII). XXXVIII and the latter half of XLI are the ensuing "unconscious." And after 1840 the continuation of the Jefferson current must be looked for elsewhere. Pound found it in the awakening Italy of 1922-1933. It is important to grasp, amid the shifting details of these eleven cantos, Pound's intuition of a clear forward current running from Jefferson through Jackson, Van Buren, to the distributionist economists (Canto XXXVIII, p. 40, states the gist of Douglas' analysis) to the regeneration of Italy:

(2) After [the revolution] Jefferson governed our forefathers for twenty-four years, and you might almost say he governed for forty-eight. There was the slight cross-current of Quincy Adams, but there was the intensely Jeffersonian drive of Van Buren.

When I say twenty-four years I count Jefferson's eight years as President and the sixteen wherein he governed more or less through deputies, Madison and Monroe (p. 14).

As a further light, there may also be cited:

(3) The reduction of Jefferson's thought to sixteen permanent principles (pp. 114-119).

(4) The Bank War (pp. 120-124, 95-96). This, the gist of the Van Buren canto (XXXVII), has become less esoteric since the impact of Schlesinger's *Age of Jackson* (1945). In 1935 Pound was compelled to write, "The war of the 1830's is not to be found in the school-books. Jackson is regarded as a tobacco-chewing half-wit, or tupenny militarist, the murderer of a few Indians, and the victor of New Orleans; Van Buren either vilified or forgotten."

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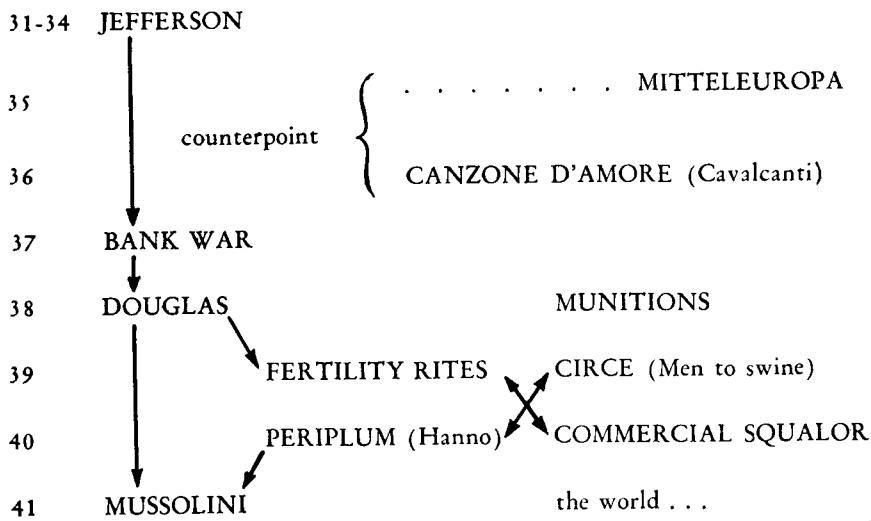

CANTOS XLII-LI

This section is a gathering of energies, a consolidation of motifs, marked by a steady ground-bass of folk-wisdom: the bank of Siena founded on "the abundance of nature with the whole folk behind it," the catalogue of communal wrongs wrought by usury in XLV, the appeal to the public jury in XLVI, the resurgence of fertility in XLVII, the balancing of popular wisdom (Hawaiian navigators, fly-fishermen) against financial trickery in XLVIII and LI, the tranquil lyric XLIX passing into communal chant.

The foundation and career of the Monte dei Paschi in Cantos XLII-XLIV is the second *episode* in the poem (the first is the Malatesta sequence, VIII-XI). At the beginning of LII Pound glosses its significance:

> *And I have told you of how things were under Duke Leopold in Siena*
> *And of the true base of credit, that is the abundance of nature*
> *with the whole folk behind it.*
> *'Goods that are needed' said Schacht (anno seidici)*
> *commerciabili beni, deliverable things that are wanted.*
> *neschek is against this, the serpent*

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Social Credit, an Impact (1935) gives further details:

> Banks differ in their INTENTION. Two kinds of bank stand in history: Banks built for beneficence, for reconstruction; and banks created to prey on the people.
>
> Three centuries of Medici wisdom went into the Monte dei Paschi, the *only* bank that has stood from 1600 to our time.
>
> Siena was flat on her back, without money, after the Florentine conquest.
>
> Cosimo, first Duke of Tuscany . . . guaranteed the capital of the Monte, taking as security the one living property of Siena (the grazing rights). . . .
>
> And the lesson is the very basis of solid banking. The CREDIT rests *in ultimate* on the ABUNDANCE OF NATURE, on the growing grass that can nourish the living sheep.
>
> And the moral is in the INTENTION. It was not for the conqueror's immediate short-sighted profit, but to re-start life and productivity in Siena, that this bank was contrived (pp. 10-11).

42-44. MONTE DEI PASCHI

45. The indictment against USURA.

46. Indictment in another mode. Explicit clearing of the air:

"Nineteen years on this case."

This case, and with it
the first part, draws to a conclusion,
of the first phase of this opus, Mr. Marx, Karl, did not
foresee this conclusion, you have seen a good deal of
the evidence, not knowing it evidence, is monumentum
look about you, look, if you can, at St. Peter's
Look at the Manchester slums, look at Brazilian coffee
or Chilean nitrates. This case is the first case
Si requieres monumentum? . . .

19 years on this case / first case. I have set down part of
The Evidence. Part / commune sepulchrum
Aurum est commune sepulchrum. Usura, commune sepulchrum.
helandros kai heleptolis kai helarxe.
Hic Geryon est. Hic hyperusura.

47. Tiresias: fertility: power over wild beasts. Reprise of Canto I, with new inflections.

48. New images for a reprise of moral motifs. *Grasp on reality* (Browning, the puppy's pedigree, divers voyagers); *continuity* (the pedigree, seafaring traditions, peasant festivals unthwarted by Christianity or

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Fascism); *slither & illusion* (bond sales, loud speakers, election of Mr. Rhumby); *lithe energy* (falling Mars and the dismembered ox); *senescence* (the vanished houses and pavements; the old man with a basket of stones).

49. Chinese lyric pastiche: impersonal twilit peace. The senescent emotion of the old man with the basket of stones subtly transformed into the equable sustaining rhythm of immemorial civilization. This is one of the pivots of the poem: the emotional still point of the *Cantos*.

50. Italy: 1750 through Napoleon ("Mars meaning, in that case, order'") to the post-Waterloo slump. Advent and withdrawal of factive personality.

51. FINALE of first half:

正名

CANTOS LII-LXXI

At this point a continuous action in time suddenly intersects the poem. LII is a major pivot: Li Ki's prehistoric affirmation of total order, celestial, ritualistic, agricultural, aesthetic.[6] This wisdom goes into action in China, is consolidated by Confucius, and its career is traced to the emperor who ascended the throne in the year of John Adams' birth. At LXII the scene is switched to America; the process continues to unroll in Adams' actions.

This connection is not gratuitous. The European discovery of China is recorded in LX; Confucian ideas helped feed the Enlightenment, which in turn nourished the Revolution of Jefferson and Adams.

52 COSMIC ORDER.

53 GREAT EMPERORS; KUNG.

54-61 KUNG IN ACTION.

62-71 ADAMS IN ACTION.

CANTOS LXXIV-LXXXIV

At XXXI and at LXXIV marked technical innovations initiate a new

[6]Cf. communal component of Greek wisdom in XLVII: "Begin thy plowing / When the Pleiades go down to their rest." XLVII + XLIX → LII.

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phase in the poem. The first of these is the shift from predominantly emphatic to predominantly denotative rhythms, and the introduction, apropos of Jefferson, of tesselated quotations marking the statesman's registration of fact, a technique that comes to flower in the Adams sequence. The second, which initiates the Pisan sequence, depends on extremely rapid shifts of tone, shorthand juxtaposition of masses of material, a continual graceful irony of parable, and single cantos as complexly organized as former entire sequences. Confronted with this, our skeletal graphings, which now show tendencies to expand into pages on pages, must be abandoned for still more cursory thematic indications.

What is going on in the *Pisan Cantos* is no longer survey (Inferno-Purgatorio) but affirmation (Paradiso). Unpromising opportunities are cunningly seized. The internment camp becomes the modern world. Thematic vocabulary (I-XL), narrative and documentation (XLI-LXXI), are followed by meditation and digestion, a personal synthesis, the going of a lifetime of ideas into *inner* action (sustainment, nutriment, passage of knowledge into wisdom) amid catastrophes hacking cruelly at the will. A few of the most prominent motifs:

(1) Merciles Beauté (Chaucer). A new inflection of the Helen theme. "Your eyen two wol sleye me sodenly." "Beauty is difficult." "Cythera egoista." The intransigent forms, the implacable métier. Beauty "a brief gasp between clichés," its manifestations in these times unspeakably precious.

(2) Treasured memories continually sorted and ordered, their nutritive irreplaceability continually affirmed:

> *and that certain images be formed in the mind*
> *to remain there*
>
> formato locho.

Bringing these images into order is the achievement of wisdom; the order into which they are brought is the mirror of wisdom.

(3) *Periplum.* (See LIX: "periplum, not as land looks on a map/ but as sea bord seen by men sailing.") "The great periplum brings in the stars to our shore," we are told on the first page of the sequence. Things disparate in space and time are united by the experiencing mind. The poet-as-Odysseus *persona* strong once more, specifically Odysseus on his raft, after shipwreck, driven "as the winds veer."

(4) "Each in the name of his god." (Micah IV, 5). Pound's sense of the autonomy and particularity of varying modes of order receives constant expression. Echoes from Confucius (especially the *Analects*), Scotus Erigena, the Old Testament, Homer, Cavalcanti, go into one ideal order while retaining their more localized contexts and validities. (This is the exact opposite of the eclectic shopping for phrases of which Pound has been accused. Such

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allusions are not "phrases," but insights into compatible modes of life.) In a group of Old Testament motifs (Leviticus XIX, Micah IV) the Jewish law receives the supreme compliment of Confucian analogy; it itself condemns the usurer and the counterfeiter.

(5) Epiphanies of concentration camp banalities, with emphasis on the quality of affection possible even in that context: "Doan you tell no one I made you that table." The aesthetic "distance" of witty analogies is not hardness; it is convertible with affective comprehension: this is itself one of the motifs of the poem.

(6) The spectator's detachment, contemplating an ideal order which he does not enter except in his mind, is conveyed by a whole series of insect and beetle analogies; ants, lizards, green midges, butterflies, wasps, beautifully fulfill without fumble or hiatus their proper modes of being. Analogies are present on the one hand with the autonomy of innumerable modes of intelligible order (the ant makes no apologies to the butterfly), on the other hand with the unfaltering certainty of action of the ideal poet or statesman (the ant knows no gap between theory and practice).

Such tabulation could go on at great length; enough has been done to show that the range of reference is not haphazard. The total action of the sequence may be very sketchily indicated as follows:

I: SYNTHESIS OF FEELING AND FACT

74. (25 pages) Recapitulation and memories. Public and personal experience gradually achieve stereoscopic focus.

75. Indestructible affirmation: Jannequin's music. Metamorphoses in a mode that does not (as in XXVII-XXVIII) sap the integrity of the concept.

76. *Lyric fact* — *Physical fact*

Desolation of spirit underlying rapid alternation of opposites.

77. Kindly memories — 78. Unrighteous war

Counterpoint, issuing in lynx-chorus. Perennial form, in touch with folk-rhythms, affirmed against welter.

II: SYNTHESIS OF KNOWLEDGE AND DESIRE

80. (23 pages) The struggle with recalcitrant beauty as focus of personal history (Cf. *Mauberley*). Artist as Odysseus. Closing ideogram of England as it was when Pound left it about 1920.

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81. Artist-explorers. "Pull down thy vanity" and affirmation of accomplishment.

82. Back-swing of emotional pendulum: Regrets and death-wish.

83. Descent of rain and peace from heaven (Hudor et Pax) as outer and inner worlds achieve fusion. Elegiac treatment of factive elements and persons.

84. Toughening: troubles chalked up to experience. "Out of all this beauty something must come."

The above outline has been scamped even in its own area of reference. Nothing has been said about the subtle and elaborate variations of verse texture, or the scale of emotional intensity, surprisingly varied even in the most apparently unpromising sections. The Chinese chronicle, for example, is as brilliant as anything in the poem, obviously so, for example, at the end of Canto LVIII:

Atrox MING, atrox finis
the nine gates were in flame.
Manchu with Ousan put down many rebels
Ousan offered to pay off these Manchu
who replied then with courtesy:
we came for Peace not for payment.
came to bring peace to the Empire
in Pekin they cried OUAN SOUI
a thousand, ten thousand years, A NOI
eijen, ouan soui; Ousan, Ousan
peace maker Ousan, in the river, reeds,
flutes murmured Ousan
Brought peace into China; brought in the Manchu
Litse thought to gain Ousan,
roused Ousan and Ousan
remembered his father
dead by the hand of Litse.
Τάδ' ὧδ' ἔχει[7]

[7] *Agamemnon*, line 1415; = "Haec ita se habent." Clytemnestra's brag of murder. See *Make It New*, p. 150.

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At the other end of the scale is this bare document:

> *4 to 5 million balance in the national treasury*
> *Receipts 31 to 32 million*
> *Revenue 32 to 33 million*
> *The Bank 341 million, and in deposits*
> *6 millions of government money*
> *(and a majority in the Senate)*
> *Public Money in control of the President*
> *from 15 to 20 thousand (id est a fund for the secret service)*
>
> (Canto XXXVII)

These facts are set down in a cool rage that implies the superfluity of commentary; the puny "15 to 20 thousand" in the final line drives home its own story. This balance-sheet is as eloquent as the whirling excitement of the Ousan finale. A line drawing need not carry less charge than a Wagnerian tableau.

We may close this survey with two more cross-sections.

HISTORY

Cantos I and LII establish the contrasting historical themes. Canto I, the *Odyssey,* plays intelligence against brute force, but its social context is limited to adventuring individualism. Canto LII posits Li Ki's universal order, the feeling for the whole people.

II-XXX (The West till the Renaissance) grow out of I. "In the gloom, the gold/Gathers the light against it." Clear Greek speculative stream running into marshes. Homeric clarity turning into nightmare incubus. Civilization staggering into rot. Beauty in shelved fragments.

XXXI-LI and LIII-LXXI pivot around LII. In LIII-LXXI we have continual self-renewal of a concept of communal order. "History is a school book for princes." "Kung is to China as water to fishes./War, letters, to each a time." The maxim, "Foundation of every government in some principle or passion of the people" runs through China—France—America. In XXXI-LI we have responsible rule in America and Italy: "Having drained off the muck by Vada/From the marshes, by Circeo, where no one else wd. have drained it." Abundance of nature entering the lives of the people: "The light has entered the cave. Io! Io! / The light has gone down into the cave."

In LXXIV-LXXXIV we have universal shipwreck. Order which has collapsed at public level (the substance of I having been lost and of LII having

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been betrayed) is subsumed into and conserved by the poet's mind, which becomes a depository of ideal order capable of going into action once more.

"Out of all this beauty something must come."

VOLITION

Inferno, Purgatorio, Paradiso, are volitional modes. Dante in hell was a live man among the dead; in Canto I we have the voyage of Odysseus to Tiresias, "who even dead has yet his mind entire." An *infernal* mode of directionless looking-on ("And we sit here . . ./there in the arena . . .") has its factive *purgatorial* counterpart, the *Directio Voluntatis* of Cantos XXXI-LXXI. Ironic reporting of *infernal* slither ("So this is, we may take it, Mitteleuropa") is balanced by Jefferson's survey of conditions as ancillary to *purgatorial* action: " 'this was the state of things in 1785 . . .' (Mr. Jefferson.)") The full purgatorial note is struck by Adams: " 'The revolution,' said Mr. Adams, 'Took place in the minds of the people.' "

"You who think you will/Get through hell in a hurry" need not suppose that the way upwards is marked only by programmatic bustle. A sequence of pre-redemptional states, modes of fructive stasis, not to be confused with lyrical escapism, may also be traced through the poem:

Sun up; work
sundown; to rest
dig well and drink of the water
dig field; eat of the grain
Imperial power is? and to us what is it?

and bespeaking a chthonic wisdom of human limits,

How drawn, O GEA TERRA
what draws as thou drawest
till one sink into thee by an arm's width
embracing thee. Drawest,
truly thou drawest.
Wisdom lies next thee,
simply, past metaphor . . .

In the *Pisan Cantos,* and, one may suppose, in the sixteen cantos to come, the *Paradiso* of intelligible forms emerges.

quand voz venetz al som de l'escalina
'ηθος gradations
These are distinctions in clarity
ming [8] *these are distinctions.*

[8]The ideogram of the "total light process"—sun and moon together.

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VII

Pound's Confucian, as distinguished from his ideogrammic, interests, are sometimes supposed to be a relatively late enthusiasm. The abruptness of the incursion of Chinese history into the *Cantos,* in a section written toward the end of the 1930's, is perhaps responsible for this view. Canto XIII, however, was written in the early twenties, the first *Ta Hio* translation published in 1928, and a letter quoted in Margaret Anderson's autobiography (*My Thirty Years' War*) displays Pound, about the time of the first drafts of the early *Cantos,* offering *The Little Review* an essay on Confucius.

These chance data are put before the reader to offset the frequent assertion that the author of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* had nothing but a rigorous aestheticism to sustain his long poem. There would be no difficulty in showing that the ethos of the *Cantos* is Confucian from the very first, or that, as our juxtaposition of Confucius and the Imagist Manifesto has implied, Pound's conception of aesthetic honesty showed from the first an intrinsic alignment with concepts of personal and governmental honesty, and with inspection of the moral and emotional quality of cultures and civilizations. Those who demand most loudly some paraphrasable principle of order in the early Cantos are the same who complain of the didacticism of the later ones.

The *Unwobbling Pivot* opens,

> What heaven has disposed and sealed is called the inborn nature. The realization of this nature is called the process.

At the most obvious level, this postulates a historical process. A process unfolding in time enters the poem with Canto LIII, and Cantos LIII-LXXI comprise the most important part of the work. In the life of a civilization, heaven disposes and seals in cooperation with the sage, the city-founder, the framers of the constitution. A nation, like a poem or a child, has literally a time of conception; its history consists of the realization of an initial vision from which it will depart at its peril. "Kung is to China as is water to fishes"; Cantos LIII-LXI, trace the dynastic lessons elsewhere summed up by Pound thus:

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> The dynasties Han, Tung, Sung, Ming rose on the Confucian idea; it is inscribed in the lives of the great emperors, Tai Tsong, Kao Tseu, Hong Vou, another Tai Tsong, and Kang Hi. When the idea was not held to, decadence supervened.

Cantos LXII-LXXI exhibit John Adams as the Confucius of America, registering in a hundred writings and actions a detailed concept of national probity which unfolds in time (Cantos XXXI-XXXIV, XXXVII) until the Civil War blots it from men's minds. The Confucian vision, the American Constitution, an aesthetic concept ("as the sculptor sees the form in the air"), a volitional manifestation, are all *trouvailles,* innovations not to be violated ("And Kung said 'Respect a child's faculties from the moment it inhales the clear air' "); the poet who compromises with the right word, the man who does not "abandon every clandestine egoism and letch toward things extraneous to the real man in order to realize to the full the true root," the Emperor who allows himself to be "had by the eunuchs," the President who puts the Constitution in jeopardy, perform parallel acts of treason.

It will be seen that Pound's view of history is continuous with his view of poetry, and that both find confirmation in his study of Confucius; also that the presence of history in his major poem is the reverse of accidental.

This Confucian theme of the unfolding process may be further developed as it touches the poet *qua* poet. At the level of aesthetic perception, it is now becoming commonly recognized that integrity and development are not antithetical notions. We are accustomed to line after line being resonant, cadenced, in a sense complete in itself, without being equatable with the whole poem. We are accustomed to the notion that a scene out of *Hamlet* makes good reading in isolation, and to the contrasting notion that no scene or passage is really intelligible without reference to the whole play (we no longer think of Shakespeare as a quilt sewn with purple patches); nor the play excerpted from the entire output of Shakespeare, or from the morphologies

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of "the mind of Europe, which abandons nothing en route." It is possible, that is, to intuit the principles of *Tradition and the Individual Talent* as much with respect to words in the line as to poets in the tradition.

It may now be suggested that these principles, far from being of aesthetic value merely, are analogical and applicable at personal, political, and spiritual levels of experience. The author of *Tradition and the Individual Talent* has in fact so applied them; *Four Quartets* is Mr. Eliot's most profound application of his early vision of history:

> *Every phrase and every sentence is an end and a beginning . . .*
> *. . . the pattern is new in every moment,*
> *And every moment is a new and shocking*
> *Valuation of all that we have been.*

In *Four Quartets* Mr. Eliot has realized a wisdom that engages with, without violating, the drives and preoccupations of a creative lifetime.

To say that in the *Ta Hio* Pound found a comparable wisdom ready-made would imply a clumsy antithesis. His labors over the ideograms have made their nutriment his own, as the successive translations show (compare the 1928 *Ta Hio* with the 1945 version of the same text, the *Great Digest*). Pound's translations of *The Unwobbling Pivot, The Great Digest,* and the *Analects,* his discovery of vivid imagistic and syntactic equivalents for intellectual forms embodied in the utterly alien modality of Chinese characters, the whole articulated by a tone at once tough, sensitive, resilient, and utterly new in English prose, is as much a creative achievement as Mr. Eliot's metamorphic processing of St. John of the Cross, the Ferrar community, *The Gouvernour,* his childhood memories, Dante, and a rose-garden.

On reflection this claim may become less absurd than it perhaps at first sounds. The gap between any Chinese and any English is in a way as absolute as that between an experience of dawn

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desolation and the words arranged on the page in the second part of *Little Gidding:*

> *In the uncertain hour before the morning*
> *Near the ending of interminable night*
> *At the recurrent end of the unending*
> *After the dark dove with the flickering tongue*
> *Had passed below the horizon of his homing . . .*

It is silly to talk as though the poet simply "went home and wrote it down"; equally silly to suppose that the translator of Confucius simply thumbed his dictionary and scribbled out the results. It was necessary for Mr. Eliot to fix that tone, to feel out a metrical pattern (a rhythmic correspondence with *terza rima*), to invent the local rhythms line by line (no two of the above five are alike), to hit upon the portentous syntactic paralleling of expressions of time, to fuse the departing bomber with the Pentecostal visitant, and invent the astonishing image of the *dark* dove. Similarly Pound in his cell in Pisa bringing for hours to the pages of Confucius the entire weight of a lifetime's experience saw visions, evidently, burning in every ideogram. Certain characters in the *Chung Yung* which prompted a "traditional" translator to write nothing more exciting than

> Confucius remarked: "The power of the spiritual forces in the Universe—how active it is everywhere! Invisible to the eyes, and impalpable to the senses, it is inherent in all things, and nothing can escape its operation."

emerge in *The Unwobbling Pivot* startlingly transfigured:

> 1. Kung said: The spirits of the energies and of the rays have their operative *virtu.*
>
> The spirits of the energies and of the rays are efficient in their *virtu,* expert, perfect as the grain of the sacrifice.
>
> 2. We try to see them, and do not see them; we listen and nothing comes in at the ear, but they are in the bones of all things and we can not expel them, they are inseparable, we can not die and leave them behind us. (II, xvi).

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Whether or not "the grain of the sacrifice" and "the bones of all things" are historically "in" the ideograms, it was poetic genius that saw them there. These translations are both a linguistic *tour de force* and the realized and articulated flowering of the drives and interests of a lifetime.

The Confucian ethos as understood by Pound connotes the opposite of the passivity with which China is usually associated. There is an initial distinction between probity and mere busyness:

> Chung Ni (Confucius) said: The master man finds the centre and does not waver; the mean man runs counter to the circulation about the invariable.

But what is distinguished from unfocused extroverted energy is not inanition:

> Kung said: Hui's mode of action was to seize the unwavering axis, coming to an exact equity; he gripped it in his fist and at once started using it . . .

The arena of use is inner as well as outer:

> He concentrates in a pervading study, searches benevolently as if he were watching over a rice field, he looks straight into his own thoughts, he clarifies the just distinctions (between one thing or category and another) and continues thus with vigour.

The unwavering axis is a center about which something turns; a permanent modality comprehending countless particular deeds. In the language of poetic organization,

> The image is not an idea. It is a radiant node or cluster; it is what I can, and must perforce, call a VORTEX, from which, and through which, and into which, ideas are constantly rushing.
>
> (*Gaudier-Brzeska,* p. 106).

This concordance between an early poetic and a recent ethical formulation gives us the clue to the function of the Confucian congeries in the *Cantos.* The sincerity proper to the poet as poet consists in perseverance at the task of rendering, in "images" (= poems), concepts ("Vortices") which are perfectly real and

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definite ("fields of force") but which language cannot handle as directly as it handles chairs and cows. These concepts are not static diagrams:

> An idée fixe is a dead, set, stiff, varnished "idea" existing in a vacuum. The ideas of genius, or of "men of intelligence" are organic and germinal, the "seed" of the scriptures.[9] . . .
>
> The academic ass exists in a vacuum with a congeries of dead fixed ideas which may be "good" and not quite dead, or rather which MIGHT be useful were they brought to focus on something . . .
>
> Let us deny that *real* intelligence exists until it comes into action.

This intelligible vortex, which is the end for which the poem exists, "from which, and through which, and into which, ideas are constantly rushing," is defined through a careful selection of these in-rushers, the tangible things and actions on which language takes direct hold. Thus the words that can be looked up in a dictionary and the fields of reference that can be checked in the encyclopedia are not the content of the poem. Verse that mentions cows, sheep, and grass need not be "about" cows, sheep, and grass, but may exist to render with intellectual intensity—an intellectual intensity making use of the senses—a certain mode and degree of spiritual tranquillity. And intense concentration on that mood or mode is the necessary condition of the poet's being able to render it: "Not the idea but the degree of its definition determines its aptitude for reaching to music." In Confucian language,

> Finding the precise word for the inarticulate heart's tone means not lying to oneself, as in the case of hating a bad smell or loving a beautiful person, also called respecting one's own nose. (*Great Digest*, VI, 1).

And the carrying into action of this knowledge, for the poet the making of the poem, for the reader the co-operative discovery of its meaning, "also serves to clarify the self-knowledge." It is in this way that poetry ameliorates the body politic:

---

[9]Cf. Canto LXXXIII: "That he eat of the barley corn/and move with the seed's breath."

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> He who possesses this sincerity does not lull himself to somnolence perfecting himself with egocentric aim, but he has a further efficiency in perfecting something outside himself.
>
> Fulfilling himself he attains full manhood, perfecting things outside himself he attains knowledge.
>
> The inborn nature begets this activity naturally, this looking straight into oneself and thence acting. These two activities constitute the process which unites outer and inner, object and subject, and thence constitutes a harmony with the seasons of earth and heaven.
>
> (*Unwobbling Pivot*, III, xxv-3).

This sense of the public function of the poet is as old as the Greek reverence for Homer and lasted in Europe until the time of Dr. Johnson. It took the anarchic cult of poetry as self-expression, reflex of a philosophy that divided the mind from things and knowledge from the will, to make unintelligible the words of Sir Philip Sidney:

> For suppose it be granted, (that which I suppose with great reason may be denied,) that the Philosopher in respect of his methodical proceeding, doth teach more perfectly than the Poet: yet do I thinke, that no man is so much *Philophilosophos*, as to compare the Philosopher in mooving, with the Poet.
>
> And that mooving is of a higher degree than teaching, it may by this appeare: that it is wel nigh the cause and the effect of teaching. For who will be taught, if hee bee not mooved with desire to be taught? and what so much good doth that teaching bring forth, (I speak still of morrall doctrine) as that it mooveth one to doe that which it dooth teach? for as *Aristotle* sayth, it is not *Gnosis*, but *Praxis* must be the fruit. And howe *Praxis* cannot be, without being mooved to practise, it is no hard matter to consider.

Pound tells us that "the whole of the *Divina Commedia* is a study of the 'directio voluntatis' (direction of the will)."

This account of the poet's characteristic activity parallels exactly the generalized Confucian account of the realization of "the process" by "the man of breed." He seeks to lay hold on "the unwavering axis" by a process of self-scrutiny, "finding the precise word for the inarticulate heart's tone." His grasp of

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this center is manifested in intellectual, domestic, or public actions, as the poet's grasp of his concepts is manifested in the making of poems. The action clarifies the self-knowledge as the poem clarifies its own meaning; and leavens the condition of public affairs as poetic achievement leavens that of language and so of life:

> One humane family can humanize a whole state; one courteous family can lift a whole state into courtesy; one grasping and perverse man can drive a nation into chaos. Such are the seeds of movement [*semina motuum*, the inner impulses of the tree]. (*Great Digest*, IX-3).

Interest in a philosophy which makes possible this parallel is not simply a poet's way of flattering poetry. The point is not that the poet is the prototype of the man of breed, but that the complete natural man is the paradigm of the poet. This was indeed, with somewhat different connotations, another Renaissance commonplace which the collapse of a hylomorphic philosophy ("*Descartes a coupé la gorge de la poésie*") rendered meaningless. Only in our own generation has it once more become possible to see aesthetic activities as normal and parallel (not identical) with the cardinal processes of rectificative volition. (The subject of such a poem as *Ash-Wednesday* is at one level the purification of the will, at another level the aesthetic act itself.) Kung's

> *"Without character you will*
> *be unable to play on that instrument*
> *Or to execute the music fit for the Odes"* (Canto XIII)

delimits this disciplined post-Romantic awareness; and Pound's final Confucian translations may if assimilated prove a decisive event in intellectual history, a completion of the movement toward clarifying art's status that was inaugurated by Pater, and a rediscovery of how *recta ratio factibilium* and *id quod visum placet* geared with all making and all knowing in such wise as to make separate treatises on the purpose of art superfluous for the philosophers of antiquity and the high Middle Ages.

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The Odysseus-*persona* of the opening canto presents the poet as explorer, as presider at rites, as indefatigable quester after chthonic wisdom. In Canto XXIII the Odyssean persistence, discernible still in fragments through textual and editorial opacities—

> *("Derivation uncertain." The idiot*
> *Odysseus furrowed the sand.)*
> *alixantos, aliotrephès, eiskatebaine, down into,*
> *descended, to the end that, beyond ocean,*
> *pass through, traverse . . .*

—appears in allotropic forms of patent civic efficiency; Gemisto the Neoplatonist thinks for the commonweal:

> *"Never with this religion*
> *"Will you make men of the greeks.*
> *"But build wall across Peloponesus*
> *"And organize, and . . .*

and the tenacity of the fabulous voyager animates the physicist:

> *. . . "J'ai*
> *Obtenu une brulure" M. Curie, or some other scientist*
> *"Qui m'a coûté six mois de guérison."*
> *and continued his experiments.*

The *dramatis personae* of the *Cantos,* artists, warriors, statesmen, sages, are engaged in parallel activities, faring forward, making successive statements with reference to details set in order. The undertaking of the poem, the discovery of the verbal equivalents for "the inarticulate heart's tone" of successive phases of civilization, points toward the definition of just such a congeries of intelligible concepts, containing the multiform flux of particular ideas, persons, and actions, as we have described; the proper end of poetry this, and analogous with the grasp upon the unwavering moral axis of the Confucian "man of true breed."

> Happiness, rage, grief, delight. To be unmoved by these emotions is to stand in the axis, in the centre; being moved by these passions each in

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> due degree constitutes being in harmony. That axis in the centre is the great root of the universe; that harmony is the universe's outspread process [of existence].
>
> From this root and in this harmony, heaven and earth are established in their precise modalities, and the multitudes of all creatures persist, nourished on their meridians. (*Unwobbling Pivot*, I, i-4).

Almost in the dead center of the scheme of one hundred cantos we find impersonality passing into the dispassionate anonymous ("by no man these verses"), fused with the immemorial agricultural rhythms of "Sun up; work: sundown; to rest":

> *Autumn moon; hills rise above lakes*
> *against sunset*
> *Evening is like a curtain of cloud,*
> *a blurr above ripples; and through it*
> *sharp long spikes of the cinnamon,*
> *a cold tune amid reeds.*
> *Behind hill the monk's bell*
> *borne on the wind.*
> *Sail passed here in April; may return in October*
> *Boat fades in silver; slowly;*
> *Sun blaze alone on the river . . .* (Canto XLIX)

Around this axis, the emotional tonality of which is unique in the poem, are grouped the men who are "moved by these passions each in due degree": the great Emperors, the brothers Adams, Jefferson, Odysseus, Sigismundo Malatesta, Cosimo, first Duke of Tuscany. The "outspread process of existence" is rendered in image after image, rhythm after rhythm, field after field of interest, of reference, or of action, filling in grade after grade the modes of positive and negative passion and action on an immense simultaneous scale.

In absence of air-pockets, in sharpness of definition on detail after detail, in the kind of continual relevance to contemporary tensions that alone can guarantee, through its engagement of the poet's whole personality, the permanent interest of the work

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for future generations, the *Cantos* as a whole invites application of the highest criteria. It is safe at least to say that there has been no effort at moral definition of comparable scope since the *Commedia;* though a contemporary has no means of estimating relative success. The power of Pound's invention, a corollary of his lifelong tenacious devotion to the arts, permitted him to hold mode after mode of feeling steadily in focus while his firm lines were chiseled to its image. The inferior poet does not discover what his feelings were even when he has finished writing them, and consequently never writes anything accurately. He never "sees the form in the air." His verse, in its rudderless inability to realize a foreseen and complexly discriminated project, is, like the Confucian mean man's life, not a "circulation about the invariable," but merely "a set of obsolete responses." Impossible, to such a mindless executant as Pound has more than once been accused of being, the suppression of heckling contingencies that brought the eighty-third canto out of the death-cells in Pisa:

First came the seen, then thus the palpable
Elysium, though it were in the halls of hell.

No rage or fear disturbs his focusing of "the moon nymph immacolata"; the control of tone and feeling is more remarkable in the *Pisan Cantos* than ever before, than even in *Mauberley* and *Propertius.* Line after line carves its mutation of the inarticulate heart's tone:

Death's seeds move in the year
semina motuum
falling back into the trough of the sea
the moon's arse been chewed off by this time
semina motuum
"With us there is no deceit"
said the moon nymph immacolata
Give back my cloak, hagoromo.
had I the clouds of heaven
as the nautile borne ashore
in their holocaust

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as wisteria floating shoreward
with the sea gone the colour of copper
and emerald dark in the offing . . .

(Canto LXXX)

It is indeed in these last sequences, a *Paradiso* in counterpoint, that the definition of unwavering modalities at length commences; in the preceding cantos they rather inhered by implication in actions in turn implicated in bewildering tangles of circumstantiality, or else were visible only in silhouette against a background of ignorance, vulgarity, and crassness. (It should be emphasized that the idyllic passages in the first thirty cantos are, in keeping with Greek palpitation and Renaissance grandiloquence, generally less sculpturesque than hypnotic, clean-limbed but sensuous, and in any great quantity a drug; the lady who emerges most clearly from the first half of the poem is Circe.) With the Cantos now midway through their final third, we can see the constellation of positives emerging unequivocally at last: Hellenic and Tuscan and eighteenth-century aquacities held in durable tension by the unwavering vision of Kung Fu Tse. These positives are not afterthoughts, or recent discoveries brought to the top at long last by the impact of *la tristesse*. They are, in ways the reader can learn to see, implied in the poem from the very first, from the first descent of the swift ship to the tenebrous home of undying intelligence. They are implicit, furthermore, in Pound's earliest researches into "what had been written and how," and his first Imagistic campaign, nearly forty years back, for the rectification of language and the excision of unnecessary words.

"You bring order into your surroundings by bringing it first into yourself; by knowing the motives of your acts." This recall of post-Nietzchean man from voluntarist juggernauting to a volitionist sincerity that does not exclude contemplation renders the poet's "sense of gradations" no longer

Quite out of place amid
Resistance to current exacerbations,

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and makes it possible once more to find meaningful parallels to the similes of Sidney:

> So as Amphion was sayde to move stones with his Poetrie, to build Thebes. And Orpheus to be listened to by beastes, indeed, stony and beastly people . . .
>
> . . . it is not riming and versing that maketh a Poet, no more than a long gown maketh an Advocate. . . . But it is that fayning notable images of vertues, vices, or what els, with that delightfull teaching which must be the right describing note to know a Poet by.

We have been trying to adequate our understanding here to poetry that needs no Apologie—

But to have done instead of not doing
this is not vanity
To have, with decency, knocked
That a Blunt should open
To have gathered from the air a live tradition
or from a fine old eye the unconquered flame
This is not vanity.
Here error is all in the not done,
all in the diffidence that faltered, . . .

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CHRONICLES

Progress Report on Stravinsky

JOSEPH KERMAN

STRAVINSKY'S HOLD on the musical public is practically a feature of his celebrated *métier*. It does not seem to relax over the years; in New York since the War he is the most alive of contemporary composers, the most played and the most discussed, a potent influence on another new generation. For the ballet his music has always been performed as a regular thing. At present the fine New York City Ballet Company has a particular success with his latest score *Orpheus*, and this season his old collaborator Balanchine had the excellent idea of presenting beside it Stravinsky's earliest ballet, *The Firebird*. Outside the theater Ernest Ansermet gave some glittering performances, others presented *Oedipus* and *L'Histoire du Soldat*, staged, and a young conductor, Robert Craft, is running an audacious program of Stravinsky revivals. Mr. Craft is a devotee; everyone is grateful to him for readings (even some inefficient ones) of important works from *Mavra* to *Persephone* and the Symphonies, and lesser ones like *Le Roi des Etoiles*. W. H. Auden is working with the composer on an opera after Hogarth's *The Rake's Progress*, and Mr. Craft shrewdly bids for a wider audience by having poetry readings by Mr. Auden at his Stravinsky concerts. Stravinsky's very latest composition, the long-promised *Mass*, was played three times last year and even broadcast, and the large record companies, hard-headed in their concern for musical vogue, appear anxious to obtain recordings of his recent work.[1] It is hard to avoid a feeling of irresponsibility about musical fashions of this kind, but they have more to do with our tradition as a whole than we sometimes like to think.

Discussion of this music is also vigorous, though as usual less efficient than performances of it. Articles on Stravinsky have been appearing in magazines at every level of popularity, and five books by him or about him were published here in the last two years[2]—a record matched only by the Chopin centennial. This must be viewed in the context of the thin market in this country for books

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[1] I can recommend RCA Victor recordings, under Stravinsky's direction, of *Orpheus* (DM-1320) and the *Mass* (DM-1349).

[2] POETICS OF MUSIC, by *Igor Stravinsky*. Harvard University Press. $2.50; STRAVINSKY, by *Eric Walter White*. Philosophical Library. $3.75; IGOR STRAVINSKY, by *Alexandre Tansman*. Putnam. $4.00; STRAVINSKY IN THE THEATRE, ed. by *Minna Lederman*. Pellegrini & Cudahy. $3.75; IGOR STRAVINSKY, ed. by *Edwin Corle*. Duell, Sloan & Pearce. $6.00.

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of music criticism; before 1947 there had been only two Stravinsky books issued here, and at present there are only about three on Schönberg, and not one on Béla Bartók. First of all, Harvard finally published in 1947 an English version of the *Poetics of Music*, lectures which Stravinsky delivered there in 1939-40. Then Eric Walter White's *Stravinsky* was reprinted from the English, a book tracing the life and the individual compositions systematically, with condensed analyses of all the music, often excellent, and little personal opinion, interpretation, or controversial matter. It is more complete and practical than the same author's *Stravinsky's Sacrifice to Apollo* of 1930, more sedate and less stimulating. Mr. White still has some reservations about Stravinsky's work, though he is less outspoken than twenty years ago; not so Alexandre Tansman, whose similar summary was translated from a French edition last year. M. Tansman is one of the most distinguished of the large and articulate crowd of Stravinsky's disciples. His unqualified enthusiasm for everything that Stravinsky does will set the unbiased reader on edge.

The most curious tributes to Stravinsky's fame are two omnibus volumes of appreciation published last year; in these the adulation is even sillier, coming from a great procession of critics, composers, choreographers, literary people, dilettantes, and old friends. Hardly any of them tell us anything about the music—"Stravinsky has been a basic factor in my musical life. . . ." The better of the two, thanks to the editor, Minna Lederman, is *Stravinsky in the Theatre*, an enlargement of the 1948 Stravinsky number of *Dance Index* with a fine set of pictures and a large bibliography. The articles of more than browsing interest are a condensation of Stravinsky's own *Chronicles of My Life*, 1936, and an analytical piece on the ballet music by Arthur Berger. Edwin Corle's "symposium" *Igor Stravinsky* expands an earlier such anthology by Merle Armitage, who is here responsible for an incredible book-design which reflects only too well the editorial position. The weightier articles are a human-interest story by Nicolas Nabokov, nostalgic as a Chagall backdrop, and an "abridgement" of Boris de Schloezer's 1929 book on Stravinsky, which Ezra Pound translated in full for the last issues of *The Dial*. This was not a bad book for that remote stage of Stravinsky's career; but the version used here (and in the Armitage book) is very mischievous, making M. de Schloezer's detailed and closely reasoned exposition appear altogether irresponsible. One is nettled to find his reference to the Latin of *Oedipus* as "mediaevalish" (*moyenâgeux*) abridged to "mediaeval." And Mr. Corle's whole symphony of psalms is an irritation if one tries to take it as anything more than a symptom.

II

Since the traumatic first performances of *Le Sacre du Printemps* a mass of writing has appeared about Stravinsky, and these latest books are no better and

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no worse than the rest of it, I very much regret to say. Among the most frequently repeated ideas is that Stravinsky's is a classical art in the sense that it is concerned not with the conscious expression of emotion but with the ordering of musical sounds; this is obvious, in no way shocking, and surely in 1950 not the tremendous issue that some of his admirers still wish to make of it. Indeed Stravinsky has been so occupied with this arrangement of musical material, and so successful with it, that it is of first importance to regard him as a virtuoso composer, with all the merits that this implies and very few of the faults—for example, he does not show off, and his *tours de force* have a strangely intense and humble quality. But virtuosity is not only a matter of *tours de force,* but also of a steady genius for the ordinary arrangements of harmonies, rhythms, timbres, and pitches within a melodic line. I feel a little dogmatically that critics who deny the direct exhilaration of a new Stravinsky score are either puritanical in devotion to a chaste aesthetic, or else sophisticated to the point of losing contact with the bare facts of composition. Stravinsky can communicate the "pleasure of creation" which is central to the process of composition described in his *Poetics.* What happens in poorer works is that the brilliant composing cannot blind us to the fact that what he is doing has no intrinsic or contextual relevance. One draws this line to taste; but even in the weakest pieces his operations are powerful, fascinating, and musical to the bone. Technical virtuosity inspires Stravinsky's music, a craftsman's demonstration that is dazzling, yet noiseless, abstract, and never at all meretricious.

I do not think this is an esoteric matter; that expert in virtuosity, Ezra Pound, has seen it very clearly. "Stravinsky is the only living composer who makes me feel like a dud. His music makes me as a workman in a different art want to go back to my own *métier,* overhaul my technique, and be ready to do a better job next time." *Il miglior fabbro*—this ought to please a composer who says that music can express nothing whatsoever and who likes to think of himself as a medievalish artisan. A significant use of musical virtuosity has more contemporary analogies than precedents in the music of the past. The only period when it was general was in the Middle Ages, to be sure; but not in the thirteenth century, for which Stravinsky has such sentimental affection, but at the end of the fourteenth, with Guillaume de Machaut and his followers, in the final decadence of the medieval musical tradition. Probably, too, Stravinsky's admiration for Bach rests on an appreciation of his private ideal of virtuosity. But if there is any point at all to historical parallels, it is that an aesthetic can no more be acknowledged than dismissed on theoretical grounds. One should be as suspicious of Stravinsky's friends, who see in the catalogue of his works successively transcendent ideals of classic beauty, as of his enemies, who see an equally steady collapse into contrived aridity. Committed to neither side of this dichotomy, the reader may possibly find with me that the latest

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pieces, *Orpheus* and the *Mass,* are richer and more coherent than the majority of Stravinsky's compositions from the last ten or twenty years. This at least wipes out the notion of his inevitable decline into academic irrelevance, without announcing his ascent to a newest chameleon phase.

As one tries to see more specifically the workings of Stravinsky's technique, one has to take account of his individual manner of composition, his language, better his syntax, the means by which his musical thought is presented. However dimly understood, this particular syntax on the face of it seems more original than the general aesthetic of virtuosity; it sets Stravinsky off obviously from other composers, gives him his special brand of modernism, makes him easy to recognize, perplexes the naive listener and escapes the more sophisticated, who assures himself that this must really be the same sort of music as Mendelssohn or Bartók. I have an idea that the essential peculiarity rests in Stravinsky's use of a special kind of stratified writing in which, most generally, even and disparate layers of one kind or another are systematically juxtaposed. It is not his only technique but it is his most individual; it is applied in several dimensions, and while gradations between layers become extremely subtle, many bald instances can be cited from his latest music. This is by no means the kind of musical exposition to which we are accustomed. Many writers have struggled to note down their interpretation of its effect, and have called Stravinsky anti-Romantic, international, dehumanized, machinelike (a term of praise), dry, cubist, sarcastic, parodistic, incongruous, athletic, ethereal and, naturally, classical. I feel that a description of the technique itself brings us rather closer.

It is most obvious with Stravinsky's counterpoint, looking at his scores vertically. One can fairly say that there are two kinds of counterpoint: the familiar kind practiced by Palestrina, Bach, Beethoven, and Hindemith, in which all the voices use the same sort of material and consequently blend with one another; and the kind practiced in the Middle Ages, in most extreme form by Machaut, in which the voices are given carefully differentiated material and are heard concurrently as dissociated layers. On occasion Stravinsky uses the first kind, but it is the second that he has made a particular mark of his style. He makes separate polyphonic lines more immiscible by writing them sometimes in different keys ("polytonality"), or in different tempi, or rhythmically out of step with one another, or by having one line disjunct and another conjunct, and so on. They are always differentiated with especial sharpness by the instrumentation used; as de Schloezer says, "orchestration" and "composition" mean practically the same thing with Stravinsky. An example of this terraced counterpoint that has impressed many people lately is the Epilogue of the ballet *Orpheus,* the scene of apotheosis. Here there are three discrete kinds of music played at once, each with its integral instrumental sound: a regular throbbing line on the harp; a closely-bound duet between two horns; and a much slower

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melody played in unison by a violin and a trumpet, a combination which is supposed to sound like a medieval *vielle,* according to Mr. Nabokov (and it certainly does—the violin *sul ponticello* and the trumpet *con sordino*). The two horns together, with the same instrumental color and the same musical material, make blending counterpoint of the familiar kind; the cunning suggestion that they play a "fugue" makes Stravinsky appear more learned than he here chooses to be, but it implies imprecisely the actual texture employed. On the other hand, the three separate layers—harp, horns, synthetic *vielle*—produce the kind of counterpoint that is not designed to coalesce; the three members are very easily heard simultaneously, but in no sense fuse together as do the two horns between themselves. This is Stravinsky's characteristic texture, and there is no basic problem to his harmony once one has developed a feeling for this heterogeneous polyphonic writing.

It is also important to see that Stravinsky's stratified ideal is applied formally, in time, looking at the score horizontally. Typically his music is constructed by the juxtaposition in time of separate, incongruous musical sections without preparation or transition. These sections may be quite long, or as short as a beat or two; they may be marked by a sharp break in instrumental color, or by a sudden change in key-center, often by a rhythmic interruption—Stravinsky has as many and as subtle ways of arranging them as a painter has with planes of flat color. And I think it is a just metaphor to speak of these musical sections as in a sense *flat,* though of course this no more implies lifelessness than it does in an easel painting. Stravinsky often seems to try to eliminate tension within his separate sections, as though to exaggerate their disjunct apposition one to the other. Melodically, an even, arbitrary quality results from a characteristic early technique, the constant repetition of little fragments of the tune, always slightly changed; they are worried furiously in this way for a brief time, then dropped abruptly. Harmonically, the manneristic use of *ostinato* figures (obstinately repeated short groups of notes) works towards a leveling of the sound, and a system of uniform dissonance minimizes tension as effectively as a system of uniform consonance. But Stravinsky retains a tonal difference between his sections; he is no atonalist. An analysis first proposed by Ansermet has it that each section, however dissonant, revolves fairly simply about a certain "harmonic pole," and that then a new pole is established with no attempt at modulation. On Stravinsky's rhythm a great deal has been written which I cannot understand; here too his fascinating shifts of meter have the paradoxical effect of flattening the rhythm by increasing tension uniformly, or by bringing it to a plane of arbitrary numbness. Stratification of formal construction is the basis of the same Epilogue of *Orpheus,* and in Corle's *Igor Stravinsky* Mr. Nabokov tells a very nice story about this. Stravinsky was playing the piece over to him at the piano:

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> Then, coming to a passage in the Epilogue where a harp solo interrupts the slow progress of the fugue, he would stop and say: "Here, you see, I cut off the fugue with a pair of scissors." He clipped the air with his fingers. "I introduce this short harp phrase, like two bars of accompaniment. Then the horns go on with their fugue as though nothing had happened. I repeat it at regular intervals, here and here again." Stravinsky added, with his habitual grin, "You can eliminate these harp-solo interruptions, paste the parts of the fugue together and it will be one whole piece."

The parts are carefully disjoined by a curious rhythmic stop. I would not suspect Stravinsky of attempting anything as romantic, as baroque, as expressive, as a planned series of clashes or oppositions. The continual dull jars between incongruous elements leave the compositions as bland as the individual sections themselves—"as though nothing had happened."

Probably this sectional writing is connected with Stravinsky's early formation as a composer for the ballet; it makes good sense for a certain choreographic conception. As he has written more absolute music he has worked more and more with conventional formal devices. Thus there is surely a schematic quality about the trisection of the "fugue" in *Orpheus*, and the Epilogue as a whole recalls the very start of the work as directly as does the end of the first movement of Brahms's First Symphony, or the last bars of Berg's Violin Concerto, or any number of other pieces, and has exactly the same kind of effect. For that matter the climax of the ballet, the beautiful *pas de deux* as Orpheus leads Eurydice from Hades, is in every way conventional in style, stratified neither formally nor contrapuntally. Stravinsky uses strings only, the voices all blend, and the single thematic idea proceeds through several keys in an unproblematic fashion; the only layer is a contrasting middle section, which has the precise function of the second part of a classical ABA form. Stravinsky then certainly does not restrict himself to stratified construction; still it is his characteristic manner, and however subtly modified lies at the back of procedures in all his latest music. I do not wish to argue whether or not such a style precludes the possibility of artistic unity, or whether this is even a proper question here. From this point of view his compositions can be thought of in conjunction with paintings that have pieces of *Le Figaro* pasted on them, and blank-verse poems incorporating barroom conversations and lines in German out of *Tristan und Isolde*.

Stravinsky too sometimes quotes pre-existing music, either banal or esoteric. More frequently he quite seriously incorporates general stylistic features from the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries into his own compositions. It is cheap to maintain at this late date that a composer of his stature does this because he cannot think of anything else to do, and it is solemn to claim that he has developed T. S. Eliot's "historical sense" in his relation to the musical tradition.

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But it is most fatuous of all to keep pouncing on such evocations in works where they surely never were intended. It becomes a critical fashion to try to guess what music of the past Stravinsky is supposed to be parodying in every new work; with the *Mass* Robert Craft has called up the ghosts of Dufay, Machaut, and Jacopo da Bologna, heaven help us, to say nothing of organum and Gregorian Chant. This notion is well disposed of by Richard F. Goldman in an excellent short article on the *Mass* in the *Musical Quarterly* for July, 1949. With *Orpheus* and the *Mass* it simply does not help at all to spot a little Brahms here, a little Purcell there, and so on; the style is integrated, independent, individual, no more self-conscious of the past than Palestrina with his bow to Josquin or Beethoven with his recollections of Handel. It is said that the subject of Stravinsky's music is style, an evoked idiom from the past. I should think that more often, more relevantly, the subject is his own transcendent technique.

III

Orpheus was liked, but the *Mass* pleased neither the musical nor the devout. Judgments on the religious propriety of music are often naive, of course; Mr. Goldman's discussion of this is as conclusive as it is gentle and patient. If the devout have misconstrued Stravinsky's jerky rhythms and arresting trombone-and-bassoon sounds, the musical have likely ignored certain religious necessities. A Mass is not a symphony; whether it is sung in church or at a Festival of Contemporary Music, it presupposes a liturgical framework. The text as a whole is formless, a disparate aggregate of the creed, prayers, and songs of praise, assembled over hundreds of years and not even all in the same language. The five separate parts have different liturgical functions and do not follow one another in the service; three of them are short statements which the musician may properly expand, while the other two are long disorganized recitations which have to be run through and left alone. And above all it is the *ordinary* of the Mass, the part that is sung daily through the years and the centuries, known by heart, a stable, abstract unit set hundreds of times by musicians of the past. To interpret this text is a romantic idea, perhaps an arrogant one; in the Golden Ages of church music the job was always approached as some sort of problem in musical technique. Stravinsky too has set the Mass as an abstract virtuoso exercise. But instead of trying for some arbitrary unifying thread, like Ockeghem or Palestrina, he seems to juxtapose as many different styles as he can summon up, not from past music, but from his own past experience. This causes no more overall incongruity than in the ballet music or the concert pieces; the Mass is miraculously suited to his stratified style, and gives it a legitimate exterior justification, if such be needed. Stravinsky's *Sanctus,* to take one example, though certainly made up of incongruous layers, seems to me perfectly sensible and most interesting musically at every step.

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The threefold "Sanctus" is given as an ecstatic duet between two tenors followed by a solemn choral answer, in simple alternating sections. This is a *missa brevis,* a concise Mass, so the new text "Pleni sunt coeli" comes at once, to an altogether different musical idea: a florid fugal exposition by four soloists over breath-taking pounding from the trombones. Then in immediate apposition a loud fast *tutti* "Hosanna," a microcosm of Stravinsky's recurrent passages of a primarily rhythmic nature, well known from the *Sacre.* With no transition, he places a lyric episode in best tradition for the "Benedictus," using a completely new *cantabile* style, after which the taut "Hosanna" is recapitulated freely. Stravinsky can fit these disparate parts together and make convincing music; that is his particular musical skill; the sectional text calls for such treatment at least as much as for the smooth continuity of Palestrina or Mozart.

The *Credo* is the troublesome movement for the composer. Stravinsky sets it homophonically throughout for the chorus, merging into something like Anglican point-chant, with only a single orchestral interruption, before the phrase "Crucifixus etiam pro nobis." He accentuates the words in a curious arbitrary scheme which accords with none of the rules for Latin declamation that have been used since the time of plainsong. One may neither like nor approve this procedure, but two points about it must be granted. First of all, it forms a coherent if strange parallel to Stravinsky's musical technique, in that it flattens the text by minimizing verbal tension. Secondly, since Stravinsky has always wanted to use syllables as arbitrary sounds rather than parts of meaningful words, it is in the Latin Mass text, as Mr. Craft points out, not in *Oedipus* nor the psalms of the *Symphony,* that he has found his best material; in a timeless liturgical text which has only to recall its meaning to the listener, not convey it to him. Still this peculiar declamation may perhaps bar the use of this *Mass* at an actual service—a foolish prohibition, for who hears the text as it is sung, spoken, recited, or swallowed by the average priest? No matter; the instrumentation and the fierce difficulty of the piece prevent church performances more effectively than any official statements. Stravinsky's *Mass* is as honest and touching an offering to the Catholic Church as was his arrangement of *The Star-Spangled Banner* to the United States of America on the occasion of his naturalization. But he must not imagine that Church or State will return the compliment by using them in their respective liturgies.

These last major compositions of Stravinsky do not seem to me to fall down in a single section. They are consistent, incandescent works, consummating techniques that he has worked over for forty years, at the same time his most virtuoso compositions, his most restrained, his most refined, and his most substantial. We should have a fine *Rake's Progress.* But what won't he do with a text! It will be interesting to see what happens to Mr. Auden's libretto.

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Notes on Paul Klee

SONYA RUDIKOFF

BEFORE DISCUSSING the recent Klee show at the Museum of Modern Art, we had better be reminded that the visual arts are so called because in them action is become visual. It should be helpful to remember this, particularly in relation to the exhibit of Klee's relatively unfamiliar work, which was on loan from the Klee Foundation in Berne. The two hundred and two samples on display seemed to raise again a number of the old questions—the significance of content, the problem of Klee's grotesque world, the value of his accomplishment, the identity of the man behind the mask of fear—and such questions tend to misdirect any fruitful approach to Klee's activity in art, unless they are posed in terms of what art should, after all, be doing.

Misdirected energies, however, are not wholly responsible for the seemingly irrelevant questions which intrude in the examination of Klee's work. We have been accustomed to an art which is considered to emphasize pure form; and, in serious art, where plastic as well as conceptual values may be discerned, the very presence of conceptual material will point up more sharply the apparently unsolved problem of form and content, to reveal again the prevailing dichotomy which might characterize their relation. And much as we wish to resolve this dichotomy fruitfully, in a view of art as visual action with respect to experience, Klee always seems to present us with a choice of two mutually exclusive ways for viewing his work.

This may be so because Klee's content is separable, because it is so very insistent in its demands for recognition—for consideration, often, quite apart from its plastic realization. There is the puzzling problem of the titles, for example. They have a tendency to distract attention from what we would like to call the unity of Klee's work; they force examination of their specifically conceptual significance, divorced from the terms of the craft. And this is even more true, rather than less, of the works themselves. The closeness and vividness of Klee's vision often makes it virtually impossible for us to realize fully, in artistic terms, the dimension of that vision. The nature of the vision seems to be such that it does not allow us a "way in" to the work. We are required, then, to consider the content of Klee's world, and we are put in the position of accepting or rejecting the identity of his imagination according to personal proclivities.

Appropriately enough, Klee's work is personal in a sense that most great art is not. What distinguished Klee's work particularly was the way he drew upon and related himself to non-traditional material for the exercise of his imagina-

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tion; and, in contrast, his apparent lack of interest in the public images for organizing experience—his lack of interest in the possibilities of the figure, the still life, the figure composition, the landscape. This conversion away from traditional artistic tropes makes his work personal in a technical and in almost a capricious sense. Admittedly, it is a grotesque world which Klee presents. But what makes it so is not only the bizarre qualities of the vision—its method, that is—but the very character of the images which Klee used to focus experience. Thus, it is not unusual for the question of his content to be raised. When the artistic image becomes as personal a matter of choice as it is in the work of Klee, the essential significance of that choice must surely be questioned. For, an oblique view of the natural order (which is not necessarily a deeper insight, of course) will require a complicated imaginative support. A complex of ideas has made us feel that intensity of vision is a transcendent factor. But the very nature of an oblique vision—so immediate, so shattering, so demanding—generates a greater strain on the machinery which must realize it and give it a life in art.

It was characteristic of Klee that his sensibility found its most articulate expression in linear terms. We cannot fail to perceive that the kind of media he chose were essentially those in which line predominates, in which line does the greater part of the imaginative work. This is true also of his oil paintings, which perhaps may be called so only because oil was used instead of watercolor or ink. Most of the work is small in proportions as well as in size, and *Insula Dulcamara,* at 34″ x 69″, seems shockingly large next to the others. (An ecological explanation currently has it that Klee's works were small because when he was very poor he had only a very small closet in which to paint. But, rather than explaining anything, this only makes us think more carefully about the kind of painter who makes a small closet a studio.) We also note that Klee's interest in color, in volume, in spatial forms, was rudimentary and specialized; he rarely employed them in the organization of his work, although he had other uses for them. And we might mention in passing Klee's ironic use of the arrow, which provides explicit linear direction, almost as a defensive assertion against a quivering surface, as in *Disturbed Equilibrium,* for example. Altogether Klee's production was astounding; the total seems to number about twenty-four hundred items. But, even in the face of this staggering figure, we remark about Klee a certain insufficiency. Surely it is significant that Klee chose to realize himself in media which did not allow for much intensive work. Pen and ink, watercolor, etching, drawing, are media which limit—both because the ways one can achieve effects with them are limited; and because they tend to develop the sensibility in terms of line and its properties alone. And the kinds of line Klee used, though various, are not varied.

When we look again at the content of Klee's world, we can more readily

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understand the paradox of his limitation. For, each Klee drawing is a kind of linear system for handling experience. There are, specifically, the many pieces like the *Metaphysical Transplantation—Klee Method* and the *Distillation of Pears*. These are self-conscious mechanical devices and very humorous. But we notice elsewhere how many of the drawings have this quality: how the *Little Fool in a Trance* is an absurdly grotesque kind of human mechanism, moving everywhere and nowhere; and how much tension there is in the device of the *Uneasy Moment*. Klee's strongest images, the plants and animals, become nature's mechanisms; and the *Christian Sectarian* is another kind of system.

We also notice how often an image seems to attain reality only when it has become a system, imposed on undefined and uncontrolled space—as in the transition from the *Concert on a Branch,* 1921, a pen drawing of three birdlike creatures, to the *Twittering Machine,* 1922, in which the earlier image is repeated, with the addition of a handle and some levers, on a color wash. A similar transition may be observed from *The Steamer Passes the Botanical Garden* to *Tropical Culture,* in which the same linear image is disembodied and imposed on a formless red area of varying intensity. In each of these, and in other transitions, the image is developed only in the sense that something is added to it, some new stimulus called up to affect it. The linear immediacy of each device remains essentially untouched and unchallenged. This, finally, may have been the nature of Klee's linear sensibility: that he was rarely able to explore his images, but only to attack them anew in other media, to re-direct them along other lines. Once his material became linear, once experience *became* the lines on a page, Klee allowed it to be completed, accomplished and perfected. Thus, in his choice of media, even in his continual exploration with systems, in his profusion, in the extensiveness of his work, the autonomy of line detailed his method. And his media could not allow him to penetrate too deeply into the nature of his images, but only to experiment again with a way of meeting their linear insistence.

Essentially, it was the content of his world which specified Klee's method, the content of that world as it became a system in line. Because he was almost too interested in that content, he could not explore the possibilities of the images which demanded recognition. He could only repeat them, transplant them, tether them somewhere else. His images were so gross, as it were, that he had to follow them into as many media as he could. And he was forced by the nature of his images to choose those media which did not allow for exploration. The grotesque relations he perceived required the restraint, the tension of his line, the tightness of the reality he patterned. Klee needed systems, linear devices, mechanical organizations—they were a way of keeping at a distance the consequences of his vision; they sustained the life of his sensibility.

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REVIEWS

The Drama of Jonathan Edwards

R. W. B. LEWIS

JONATHAN EDWARDS, by *Perry Miller*. Sloane. $3.50.

PERRY MILLER'S contribution to the American Men of Letters Series is a splendid book that gives us at last, what has long been wanting, a Jonathan Edwards fully realized. *Jonathan Edwards* indeed is a work of such stature that it poses at once (as only the finest books of its kind do pose) a serious critical problem about our response to its hero—for Edwards must not only be understood; he must be reckoned with. So I must distinguish at the outset between the nature of my admiration for Perry Miller and my admiration for Jonathan Edwards: in both cases it is large, but only in one does it spring from genuine acceptance. Edwards, who died at Princeton in 1758, was a formidable theologian, certainly the most dazzling intellect of eighteenth-century America; Mr. Miller, who is Professor of American Literature at Harvard and who has written *The New England Mind* and two other brief but memorable studies of Edwards, becomes with this book one of the country's most distinguished intellectual historians. But while my reservations about the accuracy and the success of Mr. Miller's enterprise are few (I shall return to them), his very achievement forces the awareness that my reservations about Jonathan Edwards can be nothing less than enormous. They are the kind of reservations one must have (if one has any at all) about Hobbes, or about Kant, or about John Dewey—about each of whom it might be said that he ought to be duplicated or stopped. For I take the Edwardsean theology to be (as I believe Santayana said of its most ancient parent system) one of the great false philosophies; extraordinarily impressive, but not quite the model kept in mind when the universe was created.

Mr. Miller himself is able to avoid any such final judgment, since he works modestly enough as an historian and professes to be dealing with Edwards primarily as an artist: a combination of terms leading to estimates of vigor, importance, alertness and even significance; but not, obviously, validity. His Edwardsean theology appears as a virile reaffirmation of the radical Protestant doctrines of the relation between God and man, grace and nature, sovereignty and freedom: but a reaffirmation looking forwards, not backwards, rooting itself not in scholastic principles but in the new psychology of Locke and the new physics of Newton. Edwards' unique and majestic Calvinism gathered so

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much strength from these sciences that its enduring affinities, as Mr. Miller persuasively argues, are less with the then current New England Puritanism than with the fear and trembling of Kierkegaard and the beautifully managed terrors of Kafka; to which one can add the *Waste Land,* and more recent poems like Theodore Roethke's *The Lost Son.* This, I imagine, is the point. For what we admire in all these works is their poetic projection of the profound unease we all share about the human situation; the terror they impart, as Mr. Miller says about Edwards, is the terror of insecurity; and when we shudder, we are acknowledging an artistic triumph. This does seem to me an essentially artistic undertaking, to shadow forth the doubts that men may have about their chances of escaping damnation; but is it not perhaps more properly the function of the theologian to address himself a little to what on earth (literally) we can ever do about it? (This is not to suggest, incidentally, that Edwards was humanistic; he was so resolutely theocentric that he could even find the doctrine of God's sovereignty in "choosing whom he would to eternal life, and rejecting whom he pleased" to be "exceedingly pleasant, bright and sweet.") Should the theologian expose to us (as so much literature, no doubt appropriately, does nowadays) our guilt-ridden conviction that our foot shall slide in due time? Or should he, by exploring not our anxieties, but final causality, lead us towards firmer ground?

In any event, a judgment about these things must be made; and while I am of course begging the question of whether there is any firmer ground than the one we delicately walk upon, my comments about Edwards and hence about Perry Miller's book should be understood as colored by the assumption that there is and that Edwards failed to discern it.

Looking more closely at the structure and content of the book, the first thing to be noticed is that Mr. Miller's technique is dramatic. I do not mean merely that the book is exciting, though it is often that; but also that Mr. Miller has dramatized his intellectual history by presenting a series of tensions, created by hostile intellectual pressures and pressure-groups and exploding into a series of polemic masterpieces. The eleven chapters of *Jonathan Edwards* are so many one-act plays, in which, after the knowing and elaborate stage-setting of Perry Miller, the great Edwardsean documents appear one by one as dramatic resolutions. (The "external biography" is inserted at four moments, between the acts, as it were). In the opening chapter, for example, young Edwards is introduced at a time when the New England Calvinist temper was softening into something more sweetly reasonable, more "humane"; when, under the influence of the Enlightenment, it was beginning to be felt that all men and perhaps all gods too were brothers who could come to some kind of agreement if they went about it sensibly; when hell was beginning to look like a convenient metaphor; when, especially, business as usual did not seem incompatible

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with the theological virtues. The postulates of Calvinist Christianity were being steadily discarded in favor of a set of attitudes a good deal more comfortable. Now if there are probably good reasons for being a John Calvin, there are none that can be detected for this kind of cushioned Calvinism—predestination is hardly the sort of thing one can be half-hearted about. Yet many were; and various groups among them were lying in wait when young Edwards came to Boston to give a widely and warily anticipated public lecture. He responded to the occasion by asserting with relentless authority that "God (was) glorified in the Work of Redemption, by the Greatness of Man's Dependance upon Him in the Whole of it." And Edwards, who meant the Whole of it, exposed with a surgeon's skill the numerous little ways by which his listeners had been attempting to put a bold face on the matter: an inch of creature-independence here, an inch there.

That is the way Mr. Miller's drama opens; and in succeeding scenes, theological, political and personal antagonisms to Jonathan Edwards evoke, by counterattack, such lasting expressions as: *Religious Affections*, *Freedom of the Will*, *Doctrine of Original Sin Defended* and an uncompleted fragment called *The History of the Work of Redemption.* Edwards assumes the role not only of a tragic hero (with a genuine tragic fall at the time of his expulsion from the Northampton pulpit in 1750), but also of the great mediator; it was his attempt to mediate that gave rise to the drama. For, confronted by a decaying Puritanism on the one hand and the new theories of knowledge and of physical laws on the other, Edwards took on the stupendous task of revitalizing the former by the insights gained from the latter. Edwards was not trying to set the clock back; he was trying to set it right. When he proclaimed at Enfield that "God holds you over the pit of hell, much as one holds a spider, or some loathsome insect, over the fire, abhors you, and is dreadfully provoked," he was not showing the way back to the paralyzing threats of Martin Luther. He was much rather extending the novel ideas of the eighteenth century to the point at which they revealed again the vital essence of Protestantism in any age. How he did so, it takes Mr. Miller 330 pages to explain, and he needs every one of them. One can scarcely expect to suggest the nature of his account in a page or so; but perhaps by one example, which I shall hope not to garble, I can offer a hint.

Mr. Miller's own definition of Edwards' thought is "that it was Puritanism recast in the idiom of empirical psychology." This is what he means. As against the theory of innate ideas and innate standards of judgment prior to experience—by which men were believed to know, to evaluate, and to which ministerial discourse must consequently be directed—Edwards drew from John Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* the notion that the only source of knowledge is sensation; that indeed the one single way in which men

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could be affected was by sensation. It was, according to the new theory, by the senses only (not merely primarily) that men knew; it was through the senses that men could grasp the "excellency" of things (or, in the metallic modern jargon, make "value-judgments"); it was by immediate response to perception that men acted; it must be to the senses that all hortatory rhetoric should appeal. Knowledge, judgment, action and hence the whole function of the minister of God were indissociably bound up with sensation: so Jonathan Edwards read Locke. (Mr. Miller's narrative here is not always clear, since he appears to exaggerate the role of innate ideas in medieval scholasticism; they had few major adherents between Anselm and Descartes, during which long period it was a commonplace that nothing could be in the intellect which was not first in sense.) Edwards accepted the new psychology at once and bent it to a reinvigoration of Puritan doctrine. It helped to confirm the belief that the human soul is passive before the infusion of divine grace, as the mind before sensations; the two processes were identical, for *nothing*, not even God, affected man in any other way. It dictated the strategy which eventuated in the almost catastrophically successful sermons of the Awakening; for Edwards' rhetoric, which aroused Northampton and much of New England to the most intense religious experiences in their history (and to experiences, such as infant orgasms and adult throat-cutting, less conspicuously religious), consisted in a series of pulverizing assaults upon the senses of his congregations. It led, after the scandalized rationalists had begun to inveigh against "enthusiasm" in religion and after Edwards himself had become alarmed by these excesses, to what was probably his finest speculative work: *A Treatise Concerning Religious Affections.*

This treatise should command our attention. There are many moments at which Edwards can speak movingly to our condition, but at no point more so than here. It uses Locke to bind religion to the "affections," or the emotions; it is a penetrating reply to the careful religious reasonableness of anti-emotionalists like Charles Chauncy; but much more than that, it is a statement about the necessary integrity of the human person, an insistence upon the dynamic unity of intellect and will, of reason and feeling, of head and heart:

> As on the one hand, there must be light in the understanding, as well as an affected fervent heart; where there is heat without light, there can be nothing divine or heavenly in that heart; so on the other hand, where there is a kind of light without heat, a head stored with notions and speculations, with a cold and unaffected heart, there can be nothing divine in that light.

In that single passage, Edwards foreshadows the whole sorry history of the divided spirit in America (or elsewhere, for that matter): the division between the indifferent intellect and the unilluminated will; between insight and an awareness of the responsibility it entails. It has been a division (and contempo-

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rary psychologists and sociologists will have their own formula for it) fatal to much of what we survey, for the light we see by grows ever chillier, and the "affected heart" responds ever more blindly. In *Religious Affections,* we hear already the voice of Hawthorne, projecting in Chillingworth, Holsworthy, Ethan Brand the compassionless brain; of Hawthorne who upset Mrs. Nightingale's dinner-party in London by interrupting a eulogy of Lady Byron to ask abruptly whether she were warm-hearted. We hear Melville, too, speaking for the heart.

So it was that Edwards employed the "sensational" psychology to cut through—to cut back, perhaps—to the primitive qualities of religious experience. The same kind of story could be told about his exploitation of the Newtonian theory of cause to buttress the traditional doctrine of the will's freedom and of original sin. What he was accomplishing by all this was a work of mediation not much less grand in intention than the *Summas* in which St. Thomas Aquinas met the challenge of the newly recovered corpus of Aristotelian philosophy and adapted it to medieval Christianity. But as in the generations following St. Thomas, so, in those following Jonathan Edwards in America, the synthesis failed to hold. Mr. Miller does not mention the older Henry James, father of the novelist and the psychologist, but he probably remembers that James, surveying the intellectual arena in 1843, wrote Emerson that: "I believe Jonathan Edwards *redivivus* in true blue would, after an honest study of the philosophy which has grown up since his day, make the best reconciler and critic of philosophy." One can dimly imagine Emerson's celestial indifference to that sentence, which he perhaps took for some kind of misprint; it was Emerson's radiant innocence and hope that created the need for a new reconciliation. It was not made in the nineteenth century, at least not acceptably so; and it has not been made since. But the widespread response to such attempts at theologico-political synthesis as those of Jacques Maritain and Reinhold Niebuhr are a measure of the depth of the felt need.

Let me mention a few reservations, mostly minor, about the book itself. Mr. Miller talks perhaps too often about "American experience" and even (somewhat embarrassingly) about "a truly great America." But he does not always disentangle the peculiarly American character of the events and the theological struggles, nor indeed of the doctrines which emerged from them. I even doubt whether it would have been especially rewarding to do so; Edwards is larger than that. Similarly, Mr. Miller's tendency to historicize leads occasionally to a misleading suggestion about Edwards' uniqueness or his modernity. Mr. Miller finds in Edwards' forceful dialectic of one-and-many with regard to the human race a conviction about the democratic brotherhood of man; something Edwards may well have believed but which is hardly contained in the argument under question. And although there are a great many fruitful

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analogies in the book, they are almost all forward-looking: Edwards is treated in a context of Hawthorne and Melville, Kierkegaard and Kafka, Freud and William James; all presumably "artists," in Mr. Miller's use of that word. But in fact many of the allegedly novel doctrines Edwards arrived at suggest rather a no less impressive repossession of long-lost insights. The new psychology has a slight Thomist air to it; as does, even more so, the definition of freedom as "consent to being"; the unhappy Edwardsean-Newtonian reduction to efficient cause had been made on and off for centuries; and Edwards' projected *summa* seems to have much in common with St. Bonaventura's *Reductio Artium.* These are footnote items; but in a book which draws much of its value from a resolute insistence upon a living and immediate Edwards, it is not entirely hospitable of the author to deny such vitality and immediacy to the great predecessors. Mr. Miller's style, which is attractively vigorous and supple, does once in awhile obscure the idea by straining after metaphor. A sentence like "Perception . . . was the way a man conducts himself in the face of reality" has an enthymemic ring which (for me) conceals rather than discloses.

There are mystery and paradox at the heart of all genuinely great religious utterances, but it makes a difference whether the mystery is due to too much light or too much darkness. For Edwards, the final understanding was, like Cusa's, one of learned ignorance; and his theology, while implacably theocentric, suffered the pragmatic defect of inviting either immobility or excess. Is there not perhaps more wisdom in a vision which sees human nature as invested with some natural powers; which sees virtue as a humanly developable habit; which thinks of grace as something we can move a little way towards? Is it not healthier to behave on the assumption that, for all the terrors and complexities of experience and for all the corruption of the heart, grace does not destroy nature but perfects it?

Malraux' World of Art

HERBERT READ

PSYCHOLOGY OF ART. By *André Malraux.* Bollingen Series. $25.00.

ANDRÉ MALRAUX is familiar to us as one of the four or five significant novelists of our time. Readers of his articles on T. E. Lawrence have also seen him as an interpreter of one of the symbolic figures of the age. We know, too, about his political career in France. There was little or nothing in these various manifestations of his talent to prepare us for his new role, which is that of a philosopher of art. He calls his new book *Essays on the Psychology of Art* (on

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the halftitle) or simply (on the title page) *Psychology of Art*—the kind of inconsistency that infuriates librarians and cataloguers. Each volume has a subtitle, more conspicuous than the main title. Volume I is called "Museum Without Walls"; volume II, "The Creative Act." There is a certain amount of analysis in the second volume which might pass for psychology, but none in the first volume, which is mainly historical. M. Malraux makes no attempt at all to be systematic and those who, deceived by the title, go to his book for definitions and classifications will be disappointed. But if they come to his book with an open mind they will be delighted; much more—they will come away with a much deeper appreciation of the meaning and value of art than they could have got from any academic treatise. That is why I call M. Malraux a philosopher of art, though even that term is too formal. I think it was Spengler who once said that the literary art-form of the future would be criticism. That, at any rate, describes Malraux' new book. It is as "creative" as any novel he has written; at the same time it is informed by a philosophy which takes all the complex phenomena of art and subjects them to a synoptic vision, so that we not merely trace their interrelations, but arrive at a comparative judgment of their worth.

It would perhaps be best to make clear first what I mean (or what Spengler meant) by calling such a book "creative." It is partly a question of style; partly one of conception. The original text is, of course, written in French, and I know that tributes have been paid to the beauty of the writing. So accurate and sensitive is Mr. Stuart Gilbert's translation that this quality comes through. Take, for example, this brief description of the mosaic *Virgin* that dominates the cupola at Torcello:

> The whole significance of Byzantine art is incarnate in this last-named figure, standing aloof in the recess of the dark cupola so that none may intrude on its colloquy with fate. Under the Virgin are aligned the saints and prophets; still lower, we see the crowd of mundane worshippers in prayer. On high, looms that immemorial Eastern night, which turns the firmament into a phantasmagoria of wandering stars, and the earth into as vain a sight as the shadow of armies battling with the void; unless this passing show be mirrored on the meditative visage of a god.

France is peculiarly rich in the literature of art—in art criticism that is literature—Fromentin, Baudelaire, Elie Faure, and there is no doubt that Malraux has added another work to this category. But whatever may be his comparative merits in this literary sense, it is certain that the conception of this book is on a scale never before attempted. Of course, there have been histories of art that claimed to be universal, but being industrious compilations, they usually omitted what a philosopher of art would find most significant—that art of stained glass, for example, which Malraux restores to its true place—"a form

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of expression whose specificity no artist can fail to recognize if he compares it with other plastic expressions of Romanesque art, such as the fresco or mosaic." "It exists in its own right and speaks a language which has analogies with the lyricism of the painted picture, from Van Gogh to Rouault." What distinguishes Malraux' survey is not only its completeness (his knowledge of Oriental art, for example, is just as detailed and "first-hand" as his knowledge of modern French painting or Gothic sculpture); his rare virtue lies in the ability with which he arranges his masterpieces in a significant order. He calls his first volume "Museum Without Walls" because, as he explains, we now have the means of assembling an imaginary museum which is not confined, as are our official museums, to an arbitrary collection of mobile objects (with post-medieval paintings in deceptive profusion), but can, thanks to modern photography and other *aides-mémoire*, range over the whole universe of art. The objects in this imaginary museum must, of course, be selected in the right frame of mind, for "the practice of pitting works of art against each other, an intellectual activity, is at the opposite pole from the mood of mental relaxation which alone makes contemplation possible." Then a complete revaluation of all art values becomes imperative, and our Museum without Walls becomes very different from any museum we have hitherto known. What, in effect, would it contain? Let M. Malraux answer:

> Obviously, to begin with, all modern art; then the arts of Egypt, the Euphrates, Persia, Byzantium; early Christian art; the art of negro and related cultures; primitive arts . . . ; pre-Columbian and pre-historic arts; the art of the Steppes; the drawings on Greek vases; Romanesque frescoes; the sculpture of the great periods of the East—Chinese, Japanese, and Indian—this last linked up with its "colonial" manifestations in Java and Indo-China.
>
> Lastly, after the re-discoveries associated with the triumph of Manet and his followers, the Pietas of Villeneuve and Nouhans, El Greco, Georges de Latour, Uccello, Masaccio, Piero dello Francesca, Le Nain, Vermeer, Chardin and Daumier have been either hailed as revelations or promoted to the front rank.
>
> There has been a parallel retrograde movement; all vital influence has left Hellenistic and Roman art, the Italian eclectics, the Bologna school (for Stendhal, art's highwater-mark), Van Dyck's English progeny and nineteenth-century academicism. While the lessons of Giotto and Greco are more fertile than ever, those of Raphael have ceased to count. And even Raphael himself . . . one wonders!
>
> All these illustrious dead have a family likeness.

On these lines we are each at liberty to arrange our own Museum without Walls, and mine would be a little different from Malraux'. I should find more

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room for architecture (why should it be excluded in such an imaginary structure?) and for peasant art (so often the clue to a civilization). I should dare to put Leonardo's name where M. Malraux has put Raphael's, and I should find a prominent niche for Blake. M. Malraux does not mention or include Etruscan art—a strange omission. There is no Celtic or Viking art, and naturally very little Teutonic (I don't want Dürer or Holbein, but I do want Cranach and Mathias Grünewald). There is also a certain lack of Gaiety in M. Malraux' Museum—I should find a place for Austrian rococo, and even for Tiepolo and Watteau. But however much the details might differ, the main outlines would be similar and the deductions identical.

Apart from this general revision of academic valuations, M. Malraux has two or three themes to which he keeps reverting. One is the striking fact, so obvious in such a comprehensive picture of the world's art, that "only the West has ever thought that to be 'life-like' is of prime importance in art." Even in its widest sense, as realism, such fidelity to appearance is always a blind reaction to some positive form of idealism—"realism, in so far as it stakes a claim on 'reality,' claims as its province that chaotic outside world which it is art's function to reduce; there is thus no absolute system of realism, there are only realistic modes of deflecting idealistic styles. Time and again—at the eclipse of Rome, of Gothic, of the great Chinese period, of Romanticism—realism seemed to offer a great style *in extremis* a last recourse against death." What the artist imitates—and his bold affirmation of this truth is perhaps Malraux' most original contribution to the "psychology" of art—is the work of art. "Every artist's career begins with the pastiche . . . The fact that it is not some supremely beautiful face which launches the painter on his career, but the sight of a supremely beautiful painting, does not lessen the emotion this experience gives him; and like all deep emotion, the emotion which springs from art has a craving to perpetuate itself. Imitation, fervently practised, is a familiar method of magic, and a painter needs but recall his first paintings, or a poet, his first poems, to realize that they served him as a means of participation, not in the world of men, but in that of art, and that what he desired was neither a plunge into the outside world nor an escape from it, hardly even to express himself, but to 'possess' the artists and feel himself one with them. Thus the pastiche is a gesture of fraternity."

The painter builds up his personality on the debris of these early imitations—some of the best pages in M. Malraux' book are devoted to a detailed demonstration of this truth in the evolution of El Greco's style. (Style, incidentally, is defined as "a means of re-fashioning the world in terms of the values of him who invents it." And by "a means" is meant above all the *technical* means. Always the notion of "mastery" is involved—mastery of materials, mastery of

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images, mastery of dreams.) The evolution of El Greco's style has been traced before, of course, but never so profitably as in the dozen pages devoted to it towards the end of this book. The conclusion of this passage is magnificent:

> Whereas the only concern of his fellow-artists in Venice had been to widen their art, Greco's sole interest lay in deepening his. In the loneliness which had closed in round the walls, covered with Moorish jasmine, of his sun-baked garden, he no longer painted anything (apart from those wonderful portraits which ensured his livelihood, and those of members of his family) save what he could not see: New Testament characters, saints and prophets. A little armour, some garments, the blazing bouquets of his *Annunciations*, and, over all, that granite sky . . . He stood in far less need of the outside world than of some of his own canvases, which he kept beside him, so as to fight them down . . . His art closed with a *Visitation* which contains no faces. Even had the world been plunged into darkness, his painting would not have heeded it.

It is this self-absorption in his craft, in the emotions that arise out of the practice of his craft, that separates the artist from the man-in-the-street. "An artist is not necessarily more sensitive than an art-lover, and is often less so than a young girl; but his sensibility is of a different order . . . Just as a musician loves music and not nightingales, and a poet loves poetry and not sunsets, a painter is not primarily a man who responds to figures and landscapes. He is primarily one who loves pictures." The man-in-the-street sees in art a means of recording life's poignant moments, but to the artist these same moments are something to be transformed, reduced to the elements of his style. And that is why the man-in-the-street feels cheated, especially by modern art. His way of seeing is at once "synthetic and incoherent, like memory . . . it only achieves focus when directed towards some act. The painter's vision achieves precision in the same way; only for him, that act is painting."

It is tempting to go on quoting from M. Malraux' book—the style is so aphoristic, the aphorisms so brilliant and detachable. But I must save my concluding paragraph for an emphasis on the humanism which animates the whole theme of this fine book (fine in more than one sense, for I have said nothing about its superb illustrations, selected with great intelligence). Humanism is, of course, a suspect word in these days of weary resignation, but it would not be disowned by the author of *La condition humaine*. Indeed, he openly uses it in this present book. He says that it is "art's very nature to seek to 'possess' space, time, and the possible, and to achieve this end by wresting them from the world man *undergoes*, and including them in the world he *dominates*. All art is a struggle against destiny, against man's awareness of all those forces outside himself that are indifferent to him, or hostile; death and the tyrant earth."

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That is the humanistic attitude in life, and to make his own position quite clear, Malraux says on his last page:

> Humanism does not consist in saying, "No animal could have done what I have done," but rather in declaring: "I have refused to do what the beast within me wished to do, and have become a man without aid from the gods." True, for a believer, this long debate of metamorphoses and rediscoveries is but an echo of one of the many voices of his God; yet surely there is beauty in the thought that this thinking animal who knows that he must die, when contemplating the far, disdainful splendour of the nebulae, can wrest from them the music of the spheres and broadcast it across the years to come, bestowing on them messages yet unknown. In that house of shadows where Rembrandt still plies his brush, all the illustrious Shades, from the artist of the caverns onwards, follow each movement of the groping hand that is drafting for them a new lease of survival—or of sleep.
>
> And that hand, whose waverings in the gloom are watched by ages immemorial, is vibrant with one of the loftiest of the secret yet compelling forms which testify to the might and honour of being a man.

It is only from the living and immortal forms of art that such a courageous creed can be derived.

The Drama, Descending

ALAN S. DOWNER

THE IDEA OF A THEATER, by *Francis Fergusson.* Princeton University Press. $3.75.

LIKE MOST CRITICS of the drama, Mr. Fergusson begins with the premise that the contemporary theater is not only dead but lying. It is his method to examine the drama of the past when the theater was alive and honest to arrive at an idea of theater which may explain the present low state of the drama. As he develops and expounds his theory, of course, a great many other pertinent and impertinent matters are examined and much light is shed on many aspects of theatrical art, but the major focus is always on "the great tradition," its birth, development and decline.

If it is possible to arrive at a simple explanation for the vitality of the drama of the past and the anemia of the drama of the present, Mr. Fergusson is obviously the critic who can do it. For if critics are forever telling us that the current drama is in an unhappy condition, the theater might well remark in return

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that the study of dramatic art has been one of the most neglected or at least misdirected of critical endeavors. For far too many years, the serious writer about the theater sat him down before his study fire, with the text of the play opened in his lap, and dreamed a dream. The record of the resultant vision was another adventure of a soul among the masterpieces, and a more feeble adventure than usual, because it was unable to take into consideration the aspects of a play which made it a play and not a poem or novel. Fortunately there is some evidence that the angle of vision is shifting. Some of our critics are going to the theater, or at least learning to employ a kind of theatrical imagination, to perceive the printed play—as Mr. Fergusson says—"sympathetically and histrionically." To this new school of dramatic criticism belong Granville-Barker's *On Dramatic Method,* and U. M. Ellis-Fermor's *Frontiers of Drama,* and from it has come *The Idea of a Theater.* Mr. Fergusson has been an actor, a director, a playwright, a critic, and a teacher (which were also the qualifications of Granville-Barker), and consequently he moves among the masterpieces with native familiarity, and the adventure is for the reader who follows him.

The first step in getting to the heart of a play is to analyze and determine the nature of its action, "the art which underlies the more highly evolved arts of language." The book opens with an extended examination of *Oedipus Rex,* which is, as to all critics, *the* play (in the Sherlockian sense). Here the action is the tragic rhythm, "triumph and destruction, darkness and enlightenment, mourning and rejoicing," moving the hero in space and time from Purpose, through Suffering, to Perception.

> The Sophoclean tragic Rhythm spreads before us, in time, a spectrum of modes of action, from reasoned purpose, through suffering informed by faith, to a new perception of the human creature. . . . The whole movement occurs in time; and when at the end of a figure, we see the human creature in a new light, it is still the human creature that we see, in a world continuous (by analogy) with that of common sense. It is only by means of this tragic rhythm repeated in varied figures that the action of the play as a whole is conveyed, also by analogy; and what is conveyed is not a verbal formulation but an action which we are invited to apprehend sympathetically and histrionically.

Oedipus is the fullest realization of the possibilities of dramatic action. Later playwrights, intending to revive the glories of the Theater of Dionysos, were able to conceive of action only in a more limited sense, for instance, Racine's "action as rational" or Wagner's "action as passion." Shakespeare, of course, rediscovered the secret of the tragic rhythm in *Hamlet,* through the use of "analogous" action, or what used to be called in our simpler days parallel plots. And so the great tradition can be defined in terms of the fullness of the range of dramatic action employed in any given work. And the modern drama, with its

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"partial perspectives," has chosen to cut itself off from the great tradition by refusing to extend itself on the spectrum of action.

The "idea" of a theater is based on this penetrating, perceptive study of dramatic action. The theater is a mirror of nature, that is to say, of its society, and the greatness of a given theater depends upon the *completeness* of its reflection of human life from many angles. The theater is an "organization of the sensibility," which focuses "the complementary insights of the whole culture." So the Greek theater (the physical theater, that is) and the Elizabethan playhouse were accurate mirrors of their world both material and ideological. When Hamlet gave his impertinent instructions to the players, he assumed, Mr. Fergusson points out, "the symbolic stage of the Elizabethans, and, behind it, the traditional scene of human life which the stage itself represented; the starry firmament above, the stagehouse façade which would indicate various versions of the human City—market-place or court or castle; and the platform for the players, from which the trap-door opened down into Hell or the cellar." Hamlet is assuming, in addition, that there was *an* Elizabethan theater, that not only the Globe had a "heavens" but also the Red Bull and the Fortune. Yet in the light of the other differences among those playhouses disclosed by historical investigation, the assumption is less valid though no less attractive. Hamlet, at any rate, was talking about THE *Shakespearean* theater, which was significantly named the Globe.

We are on surer ground in considering the Greek theater as a mirror "formed at the center of the culture of its time," for there was, in Athens, only one theatrical structure, the appearance of which has been the object of painstaking archaeological research. The precise employment of any given portion of the theater building must remain speculative, however, since the texts of the surviving plays (representing only the playwrighting efforts of less than a century) demand varying techniques of interpretation. Mr. Fergusson supposes, for instance, a raised platform for the actors back of the dancing circle. But the audience area was *more than* a semi-circle, and the action of such widely separated plays as *Agamemnon* and *The Bacchae* is designed to bring the chief actors almost at once to the altar in the center of the orchestra, where they are surrounded by the chorus, which is in turn surrounded by the audience. Mr. Fergusson sees the chorus as representing the audience in a particular way, "as an organ of a highly self-conscious community." And if the theater is visualized as a kind of funnel, with the chief actor in the center, and all else surrounding him and extending away in all directions, this interpretation of the chorus acquires added persuasion; and the audience itself, with its foreknowledge of the conclusion of the play though not the means by which the conclusion is to be reached, participates in the action not only vicariously through the chorus, but directly as gods looking down on the human struggle. But even

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such a notion must be modified for particular plays. The *Oresteia,* for instance, moves in time from the mythical past to the realistic present and ends by dumping the action into the laps of the audience as themselves, as citizens of Athens. And Euripides frets under the conventional chorus, diminishes its functional nature, and is forced to rely for his conclusions on a god-in-the-machine to satisfy the audiences who have become gods in the more modern sense of gallery gods.

That is to say that *Oedipus Rex* is "the" play only in the sense that it is "a" play and a landmark of the theater whose continuing vitality entitles it to continuous investigation. As the prize-winning play of its year, also, it may be recognized as an accurate mirror of the "complementary insights of the whole culture" of that moment in time, for Dr. Johnson once wisely observed, "The stage but echoes back the public voice."

In discussing Racine's *Bérénice* and Wagner's *Tristan,* Mr. Fergusson demonstrates the extent to which the contemporary sensibility can affect the nature of its mirror. Where Sophocles extends his action over the whole spectrum, presenting directly his direct sense of the whole of life, Racine manifests only a direct sense of reason, and Wagner only a direct sense of passion.

I do not suppose that Mr. Fergusson seriously expects anyone to accept his brilliant analysis of *Hamlet* as final. Hamlet has been for too many years too many things for too many men, and every new whim and fad that brushes the consciousness lights up a new disagreement. Moulton, as Mr. Fergusson points out, long ago took the commonsensical line that the meaning of Shakespeare's plays could be discovered by analyzing their plots—but that was too simple for the philosophical critics and poetical critics and psychological critics. So Mr. Fergusson does it over, painstakingly and convincingly; demonstrating how every part of the complex structure, every character, is related to the main action of finding and destroying the hidden "impostume" which is rotting the state of Denmark. While this is applying the Stanislavsky method, it avoids the absurdities so evident in Stanislavsky's own recently published analysis of *Othello.* It has the absolute virtue of being clear, and wholly "histrionic."

It also attempts to bring *Hamlet* in line with "the great tradition," to demonstrate that the audience at the Globe, like the audience at the Theater of Dionysos, was prepared to accept *Hamlet* as a "celebration of the mystery" of human life, as a ritual experience. The idea is attractive, for it would be comforting to find common elements in two masterpieces so widely separated in time, in place, and in cultural milieu. Mr. Fergusson finds parallels in both the stage and the action: in both plays a royal sufferer must be eliminated before the pollution for which he is responsible can be purged; the physical appearance of the Elizabethan stage can be traced back through the Middle Ages "to the arcade screen of the Greek Theater itself." The latter point is com-

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pletely hypothetical; we simply do not know what the interior of the Globe theater looked like, and we are on only slightly firmer ground when we relate it to the typical architecture of its period and to its predecessors in the English inn-yard theaters and pageant wagons. As for the parallels in action, they are undeniable but inexact. Oedipus is the center of his play, while Claudius, in *Hamlet,* is more than a little left of center.

It is perhaps the timidity of a scholar which finds the most secure interpretation of *Hamlet* in the light of its own, rather than the great, tradition; that through an analysis of the action and of the relationship between the parallel plots, relates it to the popular convention of the Revenge Play by observing that three interlocking revenge actions are used to demonstrate the Christian principle that revenge is a somewhat less than honorable motive and cue for action. *Hamlet* thus is a mirror of Christian culture as *Oedipus* is a mirror of Greek, and the complete, direct, and many-faceted nature of both mirrors is attested by their continuing stage life. Possibly the key to the "great tradition" lies here.

Few readers will agree with everything Mr. Fergusson says about the four masterworks which are the subject of the first part of his book. But no reader will come away uninstructed, and those for whom the text of a play is a mystery will learn here an approach which will enrich both their reading and seeing of plays. The same kind of illuminating analysis is continued in the section on the modern drama. Ibsen, Chekhov, Shaw, Pirandello, Eliot, Obey, and Cocteau are viewed in chapters on the theaters of modern realism, of theatricality, and of poetry.

It is in this portion of the book, however, that Mr. Fergusson's concern for "the idea of a theater" and the "great tradition" forces him into an attitude of imperfect sympathy. The varieties of action which he has established in the first part continue to be useful in classifying modern drama, as the well-made play, Ibsen, Shaw and Chekhov openly concern themselves with "action as rational," while Pirandello somewhat less openly is concerned with "action as passion." Eliot, Obey and Cocteau at least endeavor to revitalize the tragic rhythm.

The difficulty lies in the theater itself. A glance at the historical record attests that the three who are most concerned with the full spectrum of modes of action have been successful only in the most limited way, while the dramatists of "partial perspectives" have created the classics of the modern repertory. Obviously if the theater is to be taken as a mirror of our culture, then that culture is too diversified to be completely reflected in a single frame.

The distinguishing characteristic of dramatic form is the directness with which it presents its vision of human life. There is literally nothing (not even

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the glass eye of a camera) between the fact and the observer. The content of the drama must therefore be filled with conviction—the spectator must be so persuaded of the truth of what he sees that he will be willing to accept as equally true the imaginative concepts of the playwright. It is interesting to watch a highly skilled technician like Ibsen carefully establishing Mrs. Alving's recognizable "tasteless parlor," and the commonplace citizens who inhabit it, before revealing the mighty unseen forces which are at conflict within it. From the same point of view, observe Shaw translating Adam and Eve into terms comprehensible to a modern English audience, and following their "act" with a deliberately topical political satire, before embarking on the fantastic and imaginative sections of *Back to Methuselah.*

The modern playright has, that is, no homogeneous audience, no widely accepted code of beliefs to appeal to. He cannot therefore simply reflect a world, he must create one, and a world which will carry conviction to those whose environment and beliefs and intentions may be in violent contrast to his own. Does not this suggest that the "idea of a modern theater" must necessarily differ from the idea of the Shakespearean or Sophoclean theater? They showed their age its form and pressure. Racine (like the English Restoration playwrights) reflected successfully a specialized audience, a coterie. But the modern dramatist, coming out into the confused market-place, endeavors once more to attract and hold the general audience. It is true that this often leads to compromise, but we must recall that the Elizabethans did not have an exclusive diet of Shakespeare, and Aristophanes is our witness that the Greeks also had their *Abie's Irish Roses.* I suspect that we have as many good plays as we deserve, and every now and then a great one.

It is hard to test greatness, without a theory of the theater, and that is another justification for Mr. Fergusson's work. He has done what few critics are able or willing to do, viewed the modern drama in the light of the whole history of the drama. But this long perspective leads him to see clearly some strange things: Obey, Cocteau, Pirandello; the perspective, that is, leads to what the general audience would see as distortion in the foreground. These are three very special playwrights, with special audiences and special appeals. Mr. Fergusson, analyzing *The Infernal Machine* or *Noah,* is so convincing that one hardly notices the absence of Giraudoux, greatest of the French moderns, from his cast.

There is a valid and interesting point involved here. Mr. Fergusson can find Sophocles, Shakespeare, Racine at the center of their cultures. In the contemporary period he observes single playwrights standing in splendid isolation. They do not grow out of their theater, but invade it. And with the increasing tendency of the playwright to cease reflecting his world and to usurp the poet's function as the unacknowledged legislator of the world, per-

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haps Mr. Fergusson should provide a sequel to the present volume, to be called *The Idea of a Playwright,* a discussion of the men sufficiently skilled to use in our day the machine set up by the gods of the theater. At any rate there is, it seems to me, a serious danger in stopping where Mr. Fergusson does with the idea of a theater based on the successful achievements of past centuries. The attempt to vitalize such a theory might turn out to yield not a modern theater at all, but a *Teatro Olimpico,* a mirror of a dead culture with an odd concession here and there to contemporary taste.

A Writer's Art

GEORGE SCHLOSS

ON WRITING: Critical Studies on Writing as an Art, by *Willa Cather.* Knopf. $2.25.

THE ONLY CHARGE against this book is its brevity. Although always reticent, Miss Cather did write more on "the art of writing" than has been collected in this thin volume, and some of it of value. Since three of the essays here have been published either wholly or in part in a previous book, it is hard to understand the principle of selection.

The editor has chosen, for instance, to reprint the early preface on Sarah Orne Jewett from the Mayflower Edition rather than the later, expanded version in which Miss Cather has added some very specific comments about the modern urban American writer, observations not found in any of her other work. It is difficult to understand too why excerpts, at least, from her appreciation of Mann's Joseph series were not included, as well as "A Chance Meeting" with Flaubert's niece where, aside from discussing literature (there is an interesting evaluation of Balzac and Flaubert and passing remarks about art in general) she *makes* literature, expresses in language louder than words what elsewhere she calls the proper end of all writing:

> It . . . leave(s) in the mind of the sensitive reader an intangible residuum of pleasure; a cadence, a quality of voice that is exclusively the writer's own, individual, unique. A quality that one can remember without the volume at hand, can experience over and over again in the mind but can never absolutely define . . .

Although the reader must be warned that for her complete critical viewpoint, never formal at best, he must go to her one other volume of occasional

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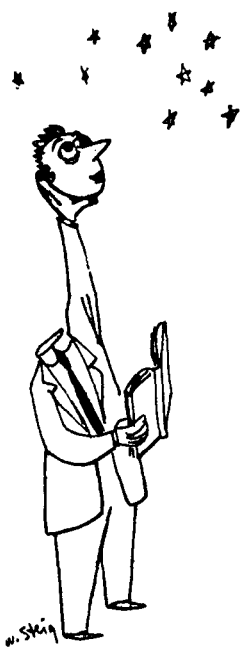
essays, *Not Under Forty* (still in print), nevertheless this new collection of letters, articles and prefaces is sometimes revealing and often rewarding.

Admired, even honored while alive, Miss Cather is still neglected. In many of the more important studies of current literature she is hardly mentioned. Put off on the one hand by the literary jingoists who by incorrectly coupling her with a Sandburg or a Benet use her as a weapon against the expatriates—spiritual or otherwise—or on the other by the heirs of the genteel tradition (cf. Stephen Tennant's harmless introduction to this book) who have adopted her but against whom she herself rebelled, most serious critics and writers have never bothered to read her—at least seriously. Yet by both precept and example she points a hopeful way for the modern writer.

The landscape of the American artist has often been painted as a battlefield, a place where Paleface meets Redskin, the one armed with an imported consciousness, intellect and aesthetic, the other with nothing more than the primitive experience of the frontier or concrete jungle. The overall contribution of Miss Cather's work is, I think, a partial transcendence of these opposing forces into something that looks like, if not a victory, at least a peace.

In the truncated essay here on Katherine Mansfield, Miss Cather sighs over



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the bad luck that deprived the overwrought New Zealander from ever putting into practice a phrase one of her characters uses in an early story: "Easy does it." "Easy does it" is an attitude Willa Cather raised almost to a method and it is not the least important of the lessons she has to teach.

Her life followed the classical pattern of growth and fulfillment. Beginning brightly, she paused for a time, then continued through a period of trial and error until, mature, she was ready to bring her work to fruition. During this space of ten or fifteen years she achieved not one but five or six fine books, of which three—*My Antonia, A Lost Lady* and *Death Comes for the Archbishop* —certainly stand out. At the end, although she diffused some of her force and seemed really to be exhausted, she was still in command of her material, and this alone is a rare enough quality to distinguish her in our literary history.

Serene in her own confidence, neither brittle nor folksy, she avoided the two traps that often waylay the American: the tenuousness of an excessive alienation or the bluntness of regional chauvinism. To her, art was a "rather personal thing after all, too . . . human to be very great" or very important "except to those who have an ear for it or an eye for it." She could point out to her more ponderous colleagues too, the condition under which it best flourishes: "a condition free," she says in her pertinent letter on "Escapism," "not so much from restriction, as from adulteration; considerations and purposes which have nothing to do with spontaneous invention."

Her tools sharpened by the European culture she not only did not fear but loved, she turned them towards what she knew best, first to a world of artists and businessmen, then, more successfully, to her pioneer West, and she created, as far as is possible, a conscious rational art. The distance between Sherwood Anderson's Ohioans and Miss Cather's Nebraskans is only a thousand miles, but the distance between the development of their makers is infinite. The one, the best of his kind, produced spasmodically and ended up pathetically tongue-tied and lost; the other, *no less critical of the American scene,* and in the end surely much less sentimental, knew exactly where she was going and went there.

Yet she came at a bad time. Younger than Sarah Orne Jewett, James and Henry Adams, she was still more than a literary generation away from Fitzgerald, Hemingway and Faulkner. Her only *real* contemporaries in prose fiction were Stephen Crane, who died young and whom, in one of these prefaces, she indicates she admired, Edith Wharton and Ellen Glasgow. The decline of the old New England intellectual values and the frontier social values as they yielded to the new monopolied vulgarity and its own later postwar counter-revolt isolated her, accounted for her elegiac bias; yet this isolation may have been fortunate. It forced her to go her own way and permitted her to become both a bridge between the best and a counter-irritant against the worst

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aspects of both periods. Perched between two eras she could see the true and the false in each; though unhappily, in the press of the "new writing" her own best work, produced between 1918-1931, was passed over by the "revolutionaries" whom it might have benefited most.

Evading academicism of every kind—the hothouse variety from which she emerged, the muckraking realism of her youth, and the harsh, abstract urbanity which surrounded her later life—she was able to keep her balance. Because she preserved what was worthwhile in the past, she could welcome the essentially new. An admirer of Proust, Mann, Stravinsky, and the modern painters especially, she could detect the obscurantism of many of their camp followers and the coarseness of the growing, tough, wise-guy journalism she so much deplored, deplored yet understood:

"I should say the greatest obstacles that writers today have to get over are the dazzling journalistic successes of twenty years ago. . . . The whole aim of that school . . . was novelty—never a very important thing in art. They gave us altogether poor standards—taught us to multiply our ideas instead of to condense them," and art, she writes in her essay on fiction, "should simplify. That indeed, is very nearly the whole of the higher artistic process; finding what conventions of form and what detail one can do without and yet preserve —the spirit of the whole—so that all that one has suppressed . . . is there to the reader's consciousness as much as if it were in type on the page. . . . Whatever is felt upon the page without being specifically named there . . . that is created."

This theme, rendered in her fiction, is dominant in her criticism and is a good antidote to the textbook competence of the creative writing courses which, getting hold of a half-truth, subtly lose sight of the larger issue: art—design—as something more than competence. She is willing to lose her life to find that mysterious "gift of sympathy" that comes from an indefinable process of "persistence, survival, recurrence in the writer's mind," emerging from "shapes and scenes that have teased the mind for years."

Still, she commends competence as far as it goes, and rebukes a facile romantic attitude towards personal expression:

> The novelist must learn to write and then he must unlearn it; just as the modern painter learns to draw, and then learns when utterly to disregard his accomplishment, when to subordinate it to a higher and truer effect. In this direction only . . . can the novel develop into anything more varied and perfect than all the many novels that have gone before.

This is the archetypal approach of the conservationist, the values of whom we of the liberal persuasion, both in art and in politics, are learning to recognize

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and appreciate. As we can see, if only in three of the letters published here tracing the evolution of *Death Comes for the Archbishop, Shadows on the Rock* and perhaps the imperfect *The Professor's House,* by holding to the traditional as a base she enlarged rather than restricted her area of mobility, and was constantly and quietly experimenting.

Like many American writers she was never completely at home in the conventional dramatic novel. She had to find her own form—a form that could attain the force of her elegiac mood, could express at once her love for nature and for the native past. After a few failures and partial successes where the content splashed over the sides, she devised a panoramic narrative strong enough to hold both her subject and her emotion. Compared to so much of our mechanistic well-made fiction even her failures are refreshing, conditioned as they are not by mere lack of technique, but by a searching effort to create something new. Discussing a writer's development she notes what must have been a reflection of her own struggle, that "the courage to go on without compromise does not come to a writer all at once," and adds wisely, "nor does the ability."

Unlike many women of talent she never got lost in the jade rooms of sensibility. Her prose, primitive yet articulate, neither circumlocutory nor infan-

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tile, is always clear, and even at its most musical never evaporates into just sound. It is charged with that echoing vibration she sought as one of the definitions of a literary art. To say, as has often been said, that she was limited—which she was and knew she was—is to say nothing. Given her gift, she realized her potential. She did the best she could possibly have done and most of the time, I suspect, tried to do a great deal more. It may have been this that led her into a too frequent use of the archaic in language and thought, but since she is seldom tedious, I, for one, am willing to forgive her almost anything. She has the rare ability, certainly in her fiction, but even in her critical writing, to create that electric *scenic* quality which in her scathing appraisal of Defoe's *Roxana* (what must be one of the most uncomplimentary prefaces ever written; she not only damns an author she is inviting you to read, but a whole materialist culture as well) she finds lacking, a quality that can vitally record in the memory an experience of any kind, whether of life or of literature.

Humorous, even reasonably tolerant, she is one of our few writers who can be reread with increasing excitement and pleasure, and her rank, however modest, is assured in that catholic hierarchy she so much respected: Tolstoy, Turgenev, the French prose masters of the nineteenth century, and the Americans, Hawthorne, Twain, Jewett and James.

More versatile than most of her contemporaries, more well rounded, there are points where the best of her achievement is comparable only to, say, the best of the painter Marsden Hartley's. Her relation to Flaubert resembles Hartley's to Cézanne. Neither *Death Comes for the Archbishop* nor the Katahdin series could be quite the same without *Salammbo* or the studies of Mont St. Victoire. In richness of color, imaginative intent and not least, sheer persistence, both Americans approximate each other—right down to their occasional gaucheries. Both went to the center of Western culture and came back, renewed, to their own peripheries. Ironically, it was through this recognition and acceptance of their provincialism that they rejoined the main body and enlarged it.

Becoming somewhat of a popular writer as she grew older, Miss Cather, by her example of integrity, patience, and sanity in face of the chaotic, indicated, in this and her other work, how she found her way. As a consequence she points out some of the means with which others, if they wish, can find theirs.

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A COMMUNICATION

SIRS:

Since some readers may have had trouble relating the "stanidsglass effect" of the essay on Joyce in your last issue (Winter 1950) to images of the fabulous artificer elsewhere acquired, I think a note or two on these latter images may be in order. The Joyce Legend is more formidable than is often realized. Stanislaus Joyce's memoir of his brother has been accessible for eight years. That it has not until now been possible to get an English version into print may perhaps be attributed to the reputations and the type-metal invested in accounts of Joyce based on more romantic premises: for example, that the artist par excellence is of a dour and Satanic cast, and that the mode of literary creation is parthenogenesis. It is only recently that the identification of Joyce with Stephen Dedalus has encountered any widespread suspicion.

Hardly any reputation, with the possible exception of Pound's, has been consolidated on the grounds of such comically superficial acquaintance. *Ulysses* is one of those books which, for sherry-party purposes, one cannot afford not to have read; while *Finnegans Wake*, like the *Cantos*, is something which one need not "read" but about which it is indispensable to have an attitude. And reading *Ulysses* as he usually does, the Bloomsday pilgrim emerges with hardly more than an attitude to that. *Dubliners*, of course, is "slight"; and as for the *Portrait*, it is a handy place, by osmosis or reaction, to get one's attitudes from.

Nor can criticism be said to have alleviated this state of affairs. The Joyce-Stephen identification has dominated and vitiated most of it. Stuart Gilbert's Bloom-like Baedeker to *Ulysses* has never been repudiated. *Transition's* claiming of Joyce for the cause of Dada, Vertigralism, the Revolution of the Word, and the Language of the Night has merely embarrassed the commentators into evasion. Joyce, of course, mercilessly pulled the legs of willing gulls; his alleged debt to Dujardin's *Les Lauriers sont Coupés* was a hoax, concocted largely for the benefit of an American professor, which was only exploded with the publication of Mary Colum's *Life and the Dream* in 1947. In general the Joyceans have been the most belated of the moderns, showing no sign of having undergone the impact of Eliot, Pound, Laforgue, or even Flaubert, James, Ford, and Conrad. So there is no paradox in an ex-judge having gone innocently to work to produce the "key" to one of the major works, or a *Readers Digest* editor having collaborated with an authority on comparative mythology to explicate the other. And with varying degrees of innocence (Kain), brusqueness (Levin), earnestness (Wilson), ingenuity (Damon), and hostility (ad lib.)

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these opacities and others have been consolidated into a well-nigh impenetrable legend.

No such orthodoxy welcomes facts, of the kind of which the Stanislaus Joyce memoir, despite its astringent jealousy, is full. Many of these facts deserve greater salience than their compiler, an important prototype of the Shaun the Post of *Finnegans Wake,* could be expected to give them.

Thus the Stephen-Joyce equation is rendered untenable for anyone who compares the last chapter of the *Portrait* with Stanislaus' account of Joyce's youthful gaiety and characteristic laugh. Yeats, we are told, compared him to William Morris for "the joyous vitality one felt in him." This being has little in common with the aesthete who, in the first chapter of *Ulysses,* "walks wearily," constantly "leans" on everything in sight, invariably sits down before he has gone three paces, or speaks "gloomily," "quietly," "with bitterness," and "coldly." And when every consequence of the notion that it was Stephen Dedalus who wrote *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake* has been expunged, there remains very little of the body of Joyce criticism on which we have hitherto been invited to feed.

The common opinion that Joyce's two long works constitute some sort of esoteric revelation receives some similarly rude knocks. "Theosophy was perhaps the only one of his enthusiasms which he came to regard as a total loss": a fact which vitiates the tone, if not the content, of Stuart Gilbert's notes on Metempsychosis, the commentaries of Eugene Jolas, and most of the work of Campbell and Robinson. It is true that Joyce made use of theosophical and kindred material constantly; but the mode in which it is present in his work is satiric. His myths are revelations of psychology, not philosophy. Of course nothing but an ability to read poetry in other than a card-index fashion was required to assure us of this truth long ago; but Stanislaus Joyce's statement has the advantage of obstructing the card-index procedures of these commentators at their own level.

Stanislaus Joyce is not the ideal critic of his brother's work; but the common sense which blocks his appreciation of the major works has saved him from the common sentimental misreading of the earlier ones in terms of emotions *reçus.* His accounts of the organization of *Chamber Music* and *Dubliners,* precisely because he is able to regard them detachedly as conscious and intelligent pieces of craftsmanship, deserve careful attention. Certainly neither of these books has received any but the most patronizing treatment from the critic hurrying past them toward a body of material where he can deploy his paradoxes and filing cards in earnest. Pound's early notes on the importance of both (see *Instigations*) go unread.

Mention of Pound suggests a final note. Joyce was an erudite man. He

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read, like Pound or Eliot, in search of procedures and orientations, seeking to know his time and its origins, not simply, as we have been given to understand, in quest of phrases for pastiche. For example, *The Oxen of the Sun* is important criticism, delivered, like Pound's in the *Cantos* and elsewhere, in concrete terms. It is senseless to ignore as a mistaken jeu d'esprit the labor that went into those parodies. Style is played against theme, paragraph by paragraph, in such a way as to illuminate both. Ages and sensibilities are juxtaposed. Similarly, Joyce, in common with the members of the London Vortex, strove to advance and ameliorate, on a level more important than battles with censors, the art he practiced. No account of his procedures makes sense in isolation from the Imagist campaign, from the work of Wyndham Lewis, from Pound's onslaught on Miltonic rhetoric and Eliot's explorations of poetry and belief in the world of Dante. So one would like to know more about Joyce's reading; and it is of great importance to be told that he was among the first of the anti-Miltonians, and that "the first reading to leave upon his mind a mark as deep as that left upon him by his religious crisis was that of the *Divine Comedy*."

It is unfortunate that Stanislaus Joyce's very virtue, the fidelity to irreducible fact as he was capable of perceiving it, which does us such service

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throughout the memoir, ultimately led to an estrangement between the two brothers and so to his accusing the author of *Finnegans Wake* of charlatanry and even refusing a complimentary copy: unfortunate not only for the pain it caused both men, but because no one near Joyce in Paris has displayed a sufficiently unambiguous interest in his work and procedures to tell us much. Stanislaus' witness, had their early intimacy persisted, would have been valuable.

The James Stephens anecdote near the end of the memoir sounds like a final legpull. One can guess at Joyce's anguish in having to defend himself in this way against the hostility of a brother who had been capable of understanding so much. His last decade of lonely eminence, of *transition*-level homage, knew small comfort indeed. And he was perhaps not the most quixotically intransigent member of his family.

Milford, Conn. HUGH KENNER

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